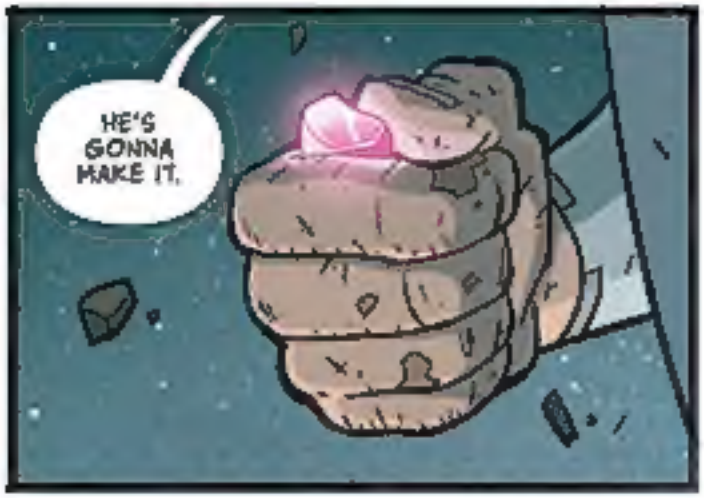
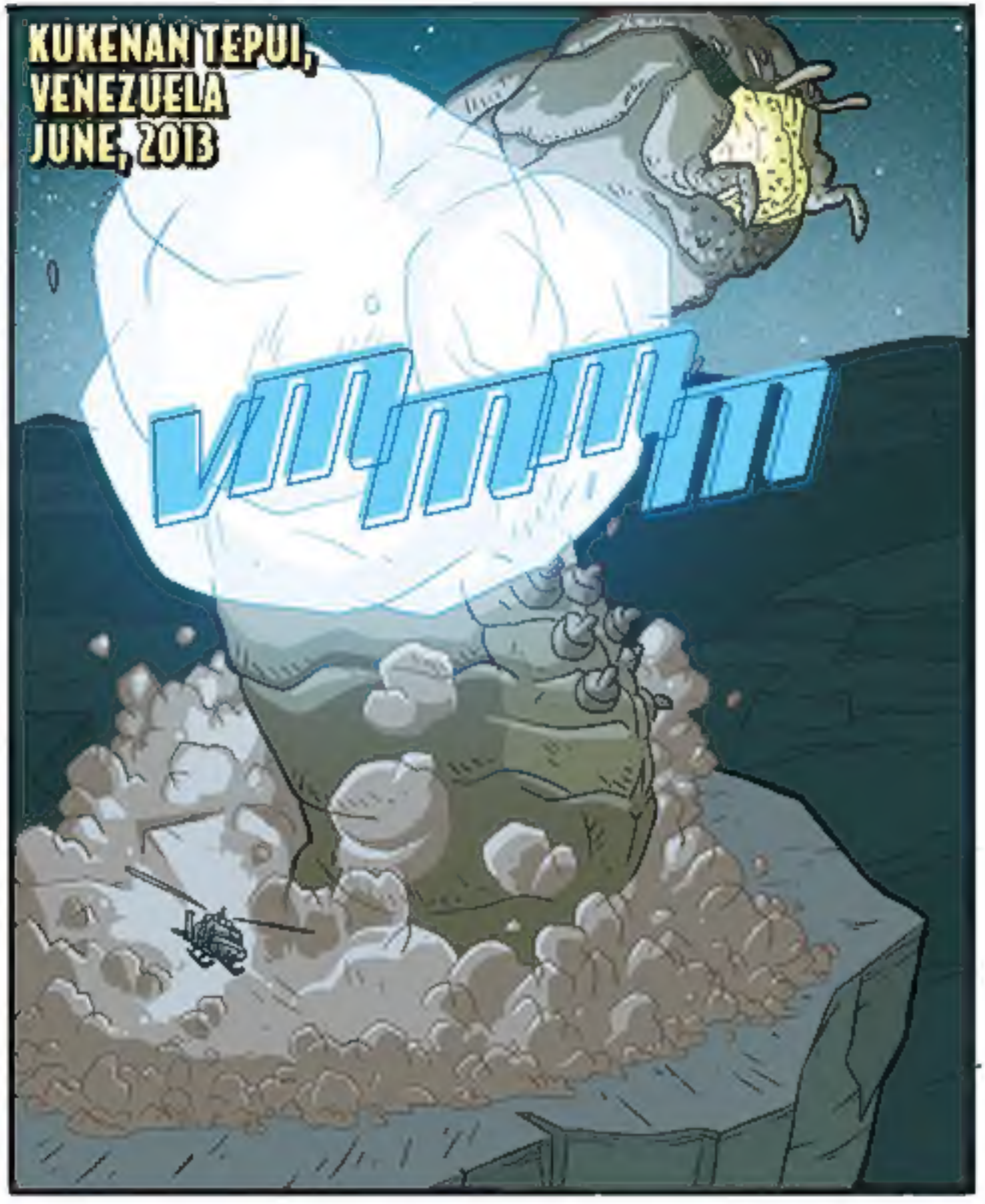
ACTION SCIENCE

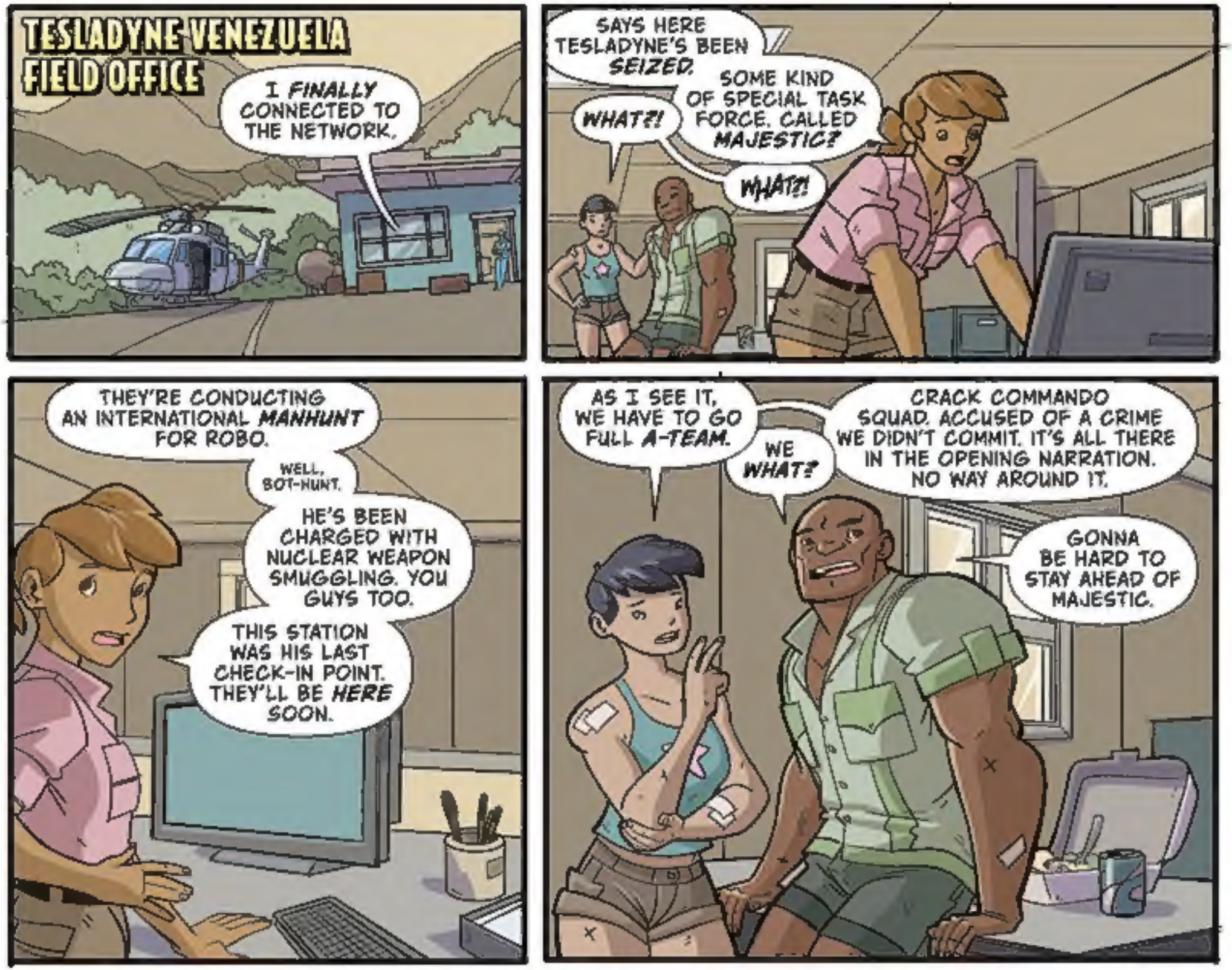
Part 1: Bernard

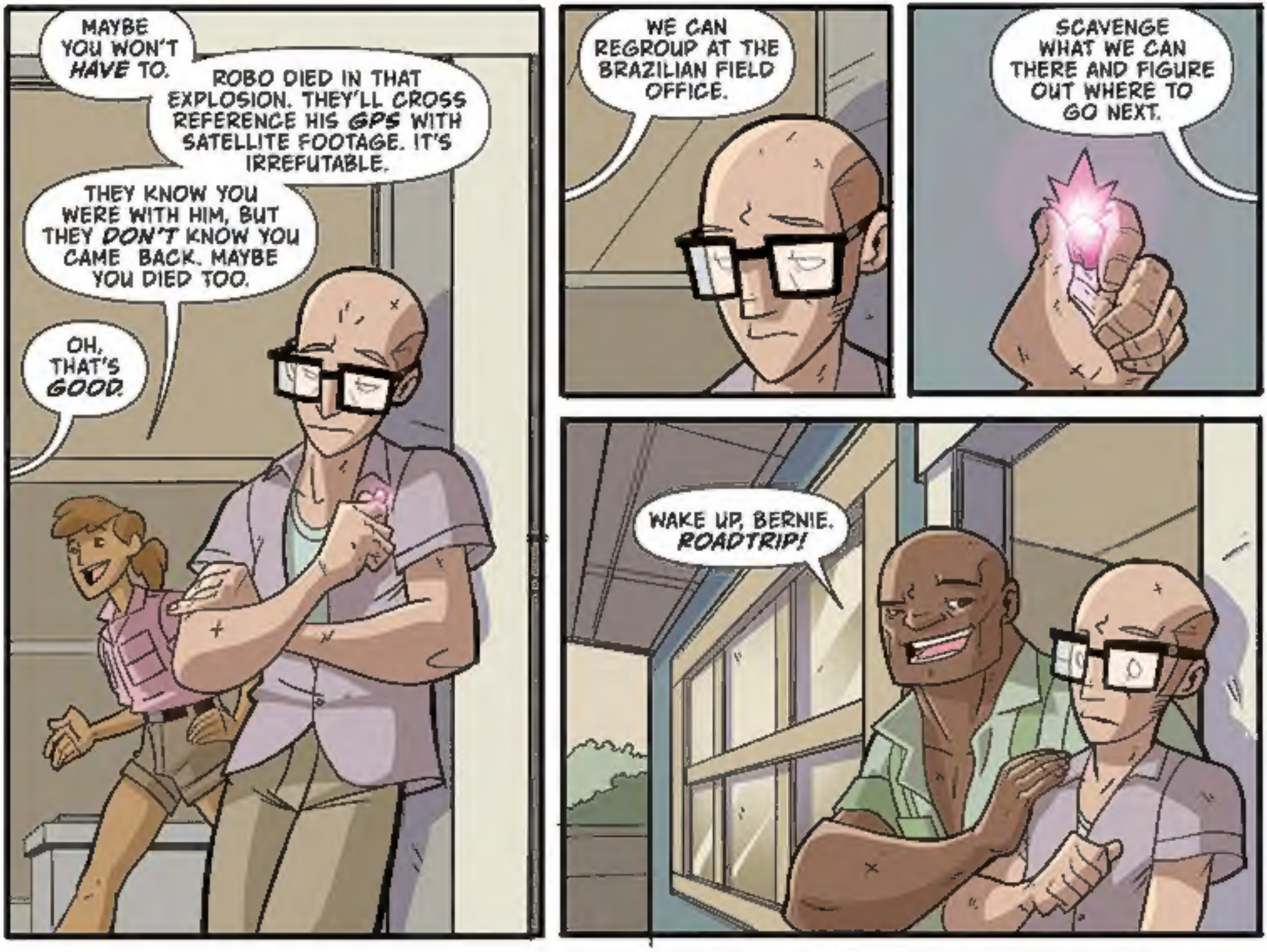
CLEVINGER • WEGENER • CLARK • POWELL

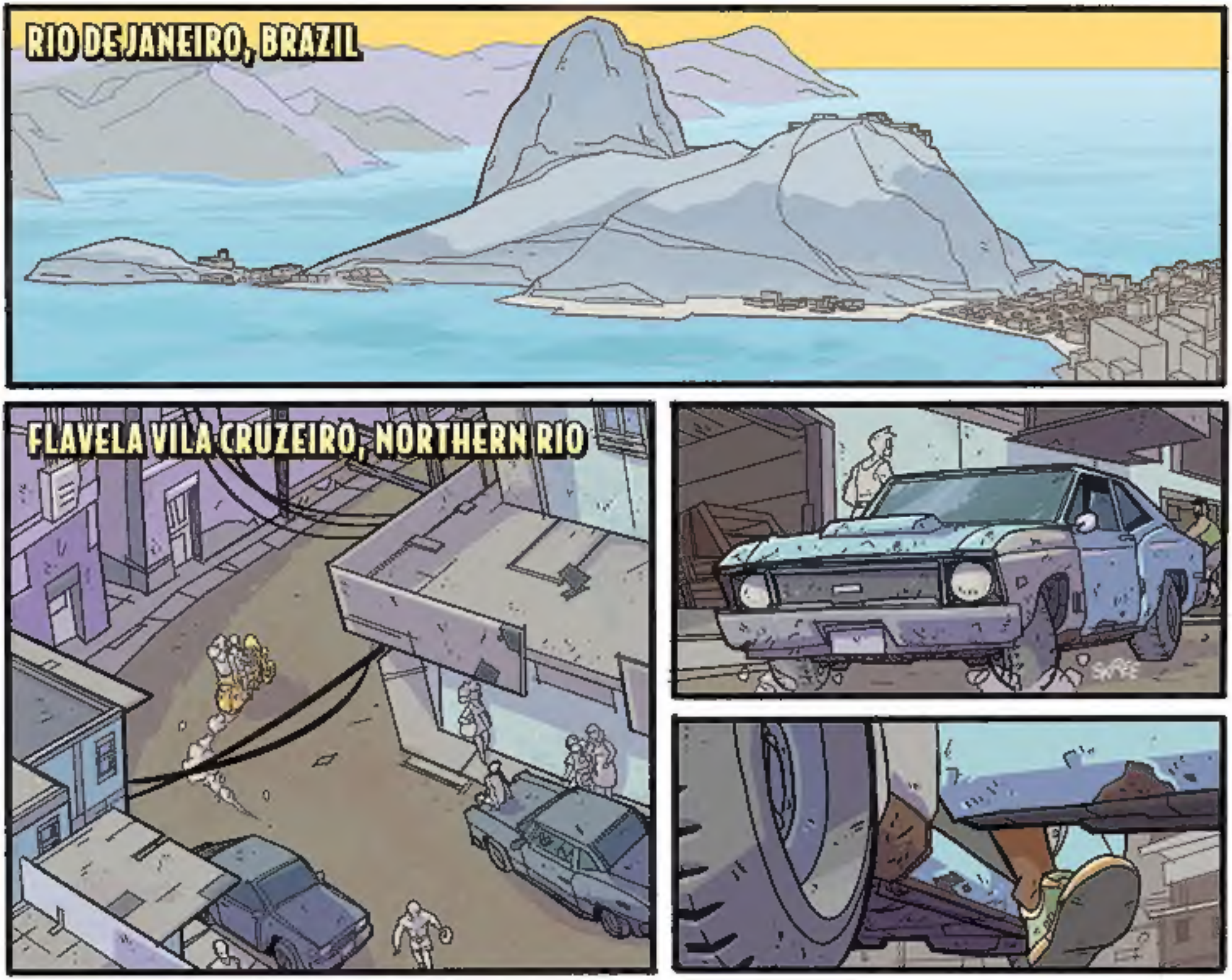


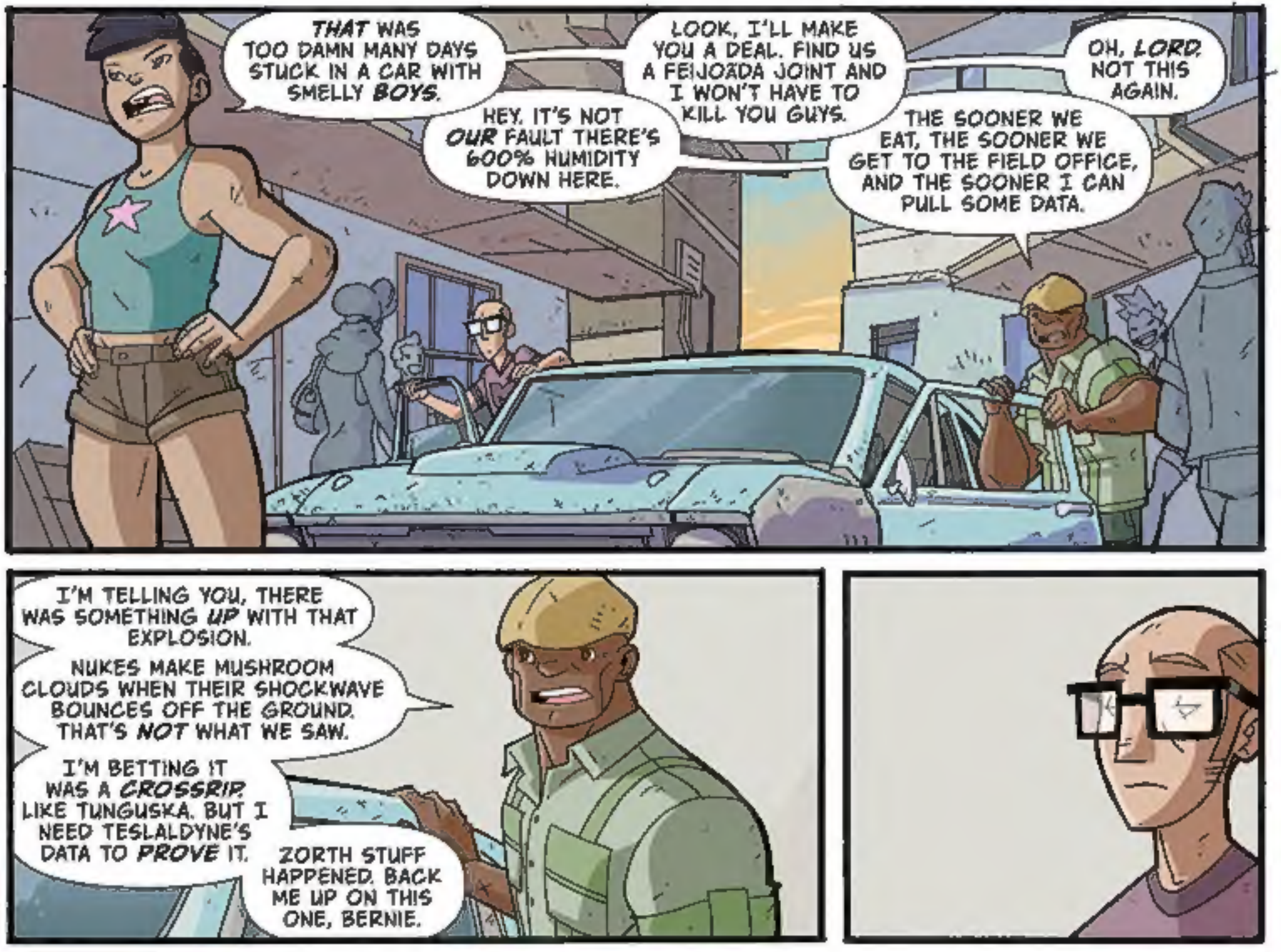

KUKENAN TEPUI, VENEZUELA JUNE, 2013
VVVV

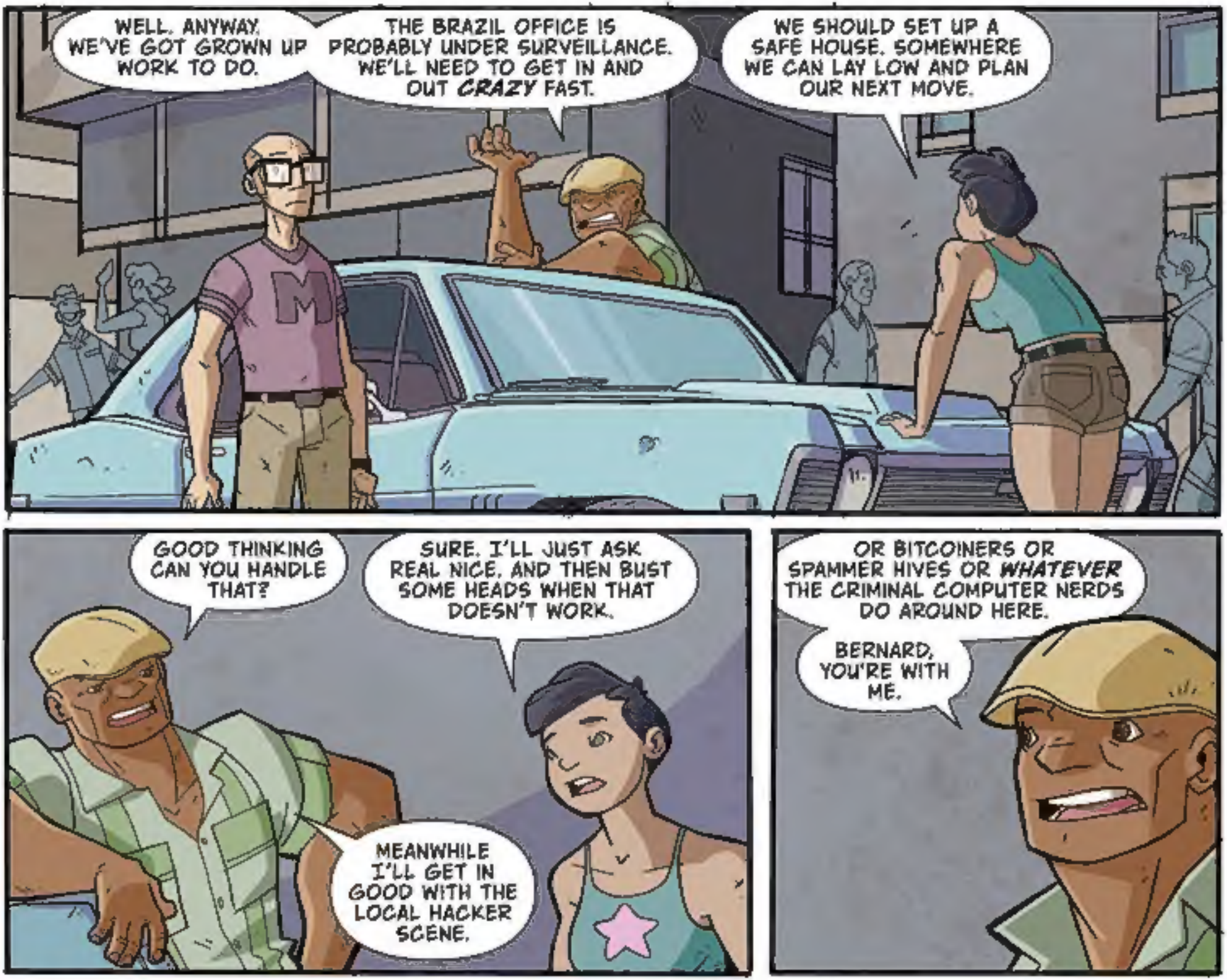
ZKROOOOM
FROOOSH

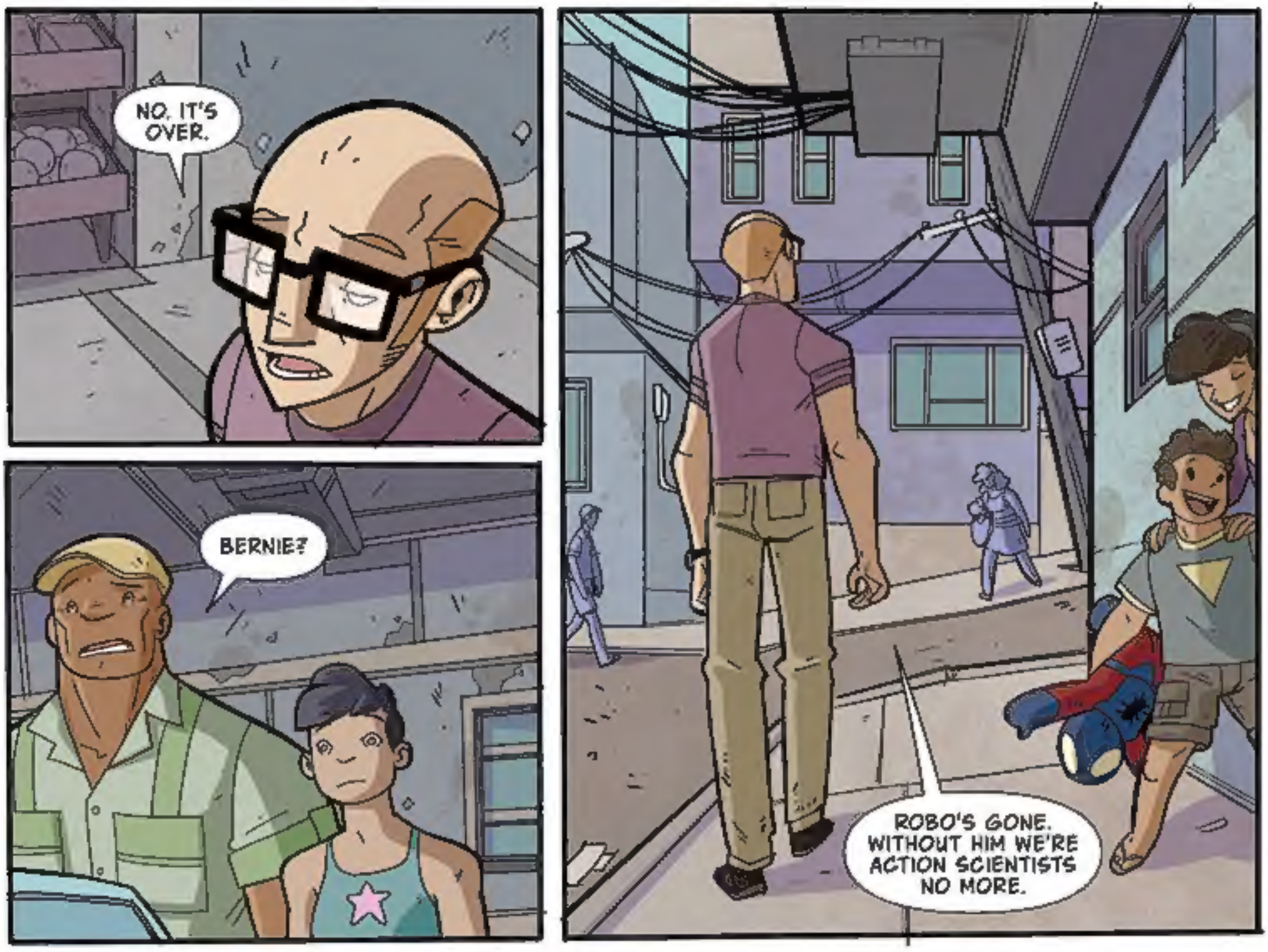

TESLADYNE VENEZUELA FIELD OFFICE
I FINALLY CONNECTED TO THE NETWORK.
SAYS HERE TESLADYNE'S BEEN SEIZED.
WHAT?!
SOME KIND OF SPECIAL TASK FORCE. CALLED MAJESTIC?
WHAT?!
THEY'RE CONDUCTING AN INTERNATIONAL MANHUNT FOR ROBO.
WELL, BOT-HUNT.
HE'S BEEN CHARGED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPON SMUGGLING. YOU GUYS TOO.
THIS STATION WAS HIS LAST CHECK-IN POINT. THEY'LL BE HERE SOON.
AS I SEE IT, WE HAVE TO GO FULL A-TEAM.
WE WHAT?
CRACK COMMANDO SQUAD. ACCUSED OF A CRIME WE DIDN'T COMMIT. IT'S ALL THERE IN THE OPENING NARRATION. NO WAY AROUND IT.
GONNA BE HARD TO STAY AHEAD OF MAJESTIC.


MAYBE YOU WON'T HAVE TO.
ROBO DIED IN THAT EXPLOSION. THEY'LL CROSS REFERENCE HIS GPS WITH SATELLITE FOOTAGE. IT'S IRREFUTABLE.
THEY KNOW YOU WERE WITH HIM, BUT THEY DON'T KNOW YOU CAME BACK. MAYBE YOU DIED TOO.
OH, THAT'S GOOD.
WE CAN REGROUP AT THE BRAZILIAN FIELD OFFICE.
SCAVENGE WHAT WE CAN THERE AND FIGURE OUT WHERE TO GO NEXT.
WAKE UP, BERNIE. ROADTRIP!

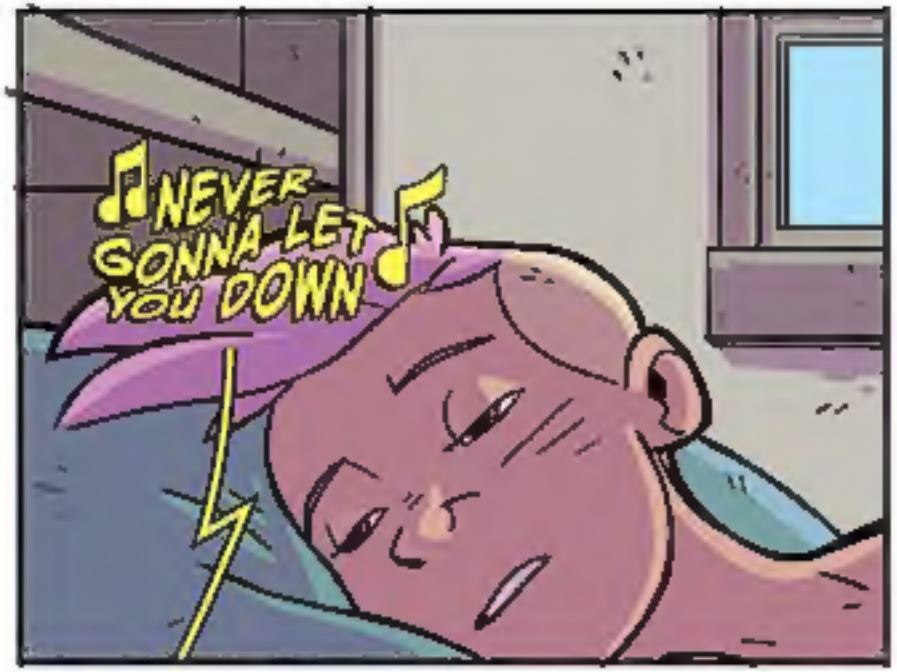

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL
FLAVELA VILA CRUZEIRO, NORTHERN RIO


THAT WAS TOO DAMN MANY DAYS STUCK IN A CAR WITH SMELLY BOYS.
HEY. IT'S NOT OUR FAULT THERE'S 600% HUMIDITY DOWN HERE.
LOOK, I'LL MAKE YOU A DEAL. FIND US A FEIJOÄDA JOINT AND I WON'T HAVE TO KILL YOU GUYS.
OH, LORD. NOT THIS AGAIN.
THE SOONER WE EAT, THE SOONER WE GET TO THE FIELD OFFICE, AND THE SOONER I CAN PULL SOME DATA.
I'M TELLING YOU, THERE WAS SOMETHING UP WITH THAT EXPLOSION.
NUKES MAKE MUSHROOM CLOUDS WHEN THEIR SHOCKWAVE BOUNCES OFF THE GROUND. THAT'S NOT WHAT WE SAW.
I'M BETTING IT WAS A CROSSRIP LIKE TUNGUSKA. BUT I NEED TESLALDYNE'S DATA TO PROVE IT.
ZORTH STUFF HAPPENED. BACK ME UP ON THIS ONE, BERNIE.

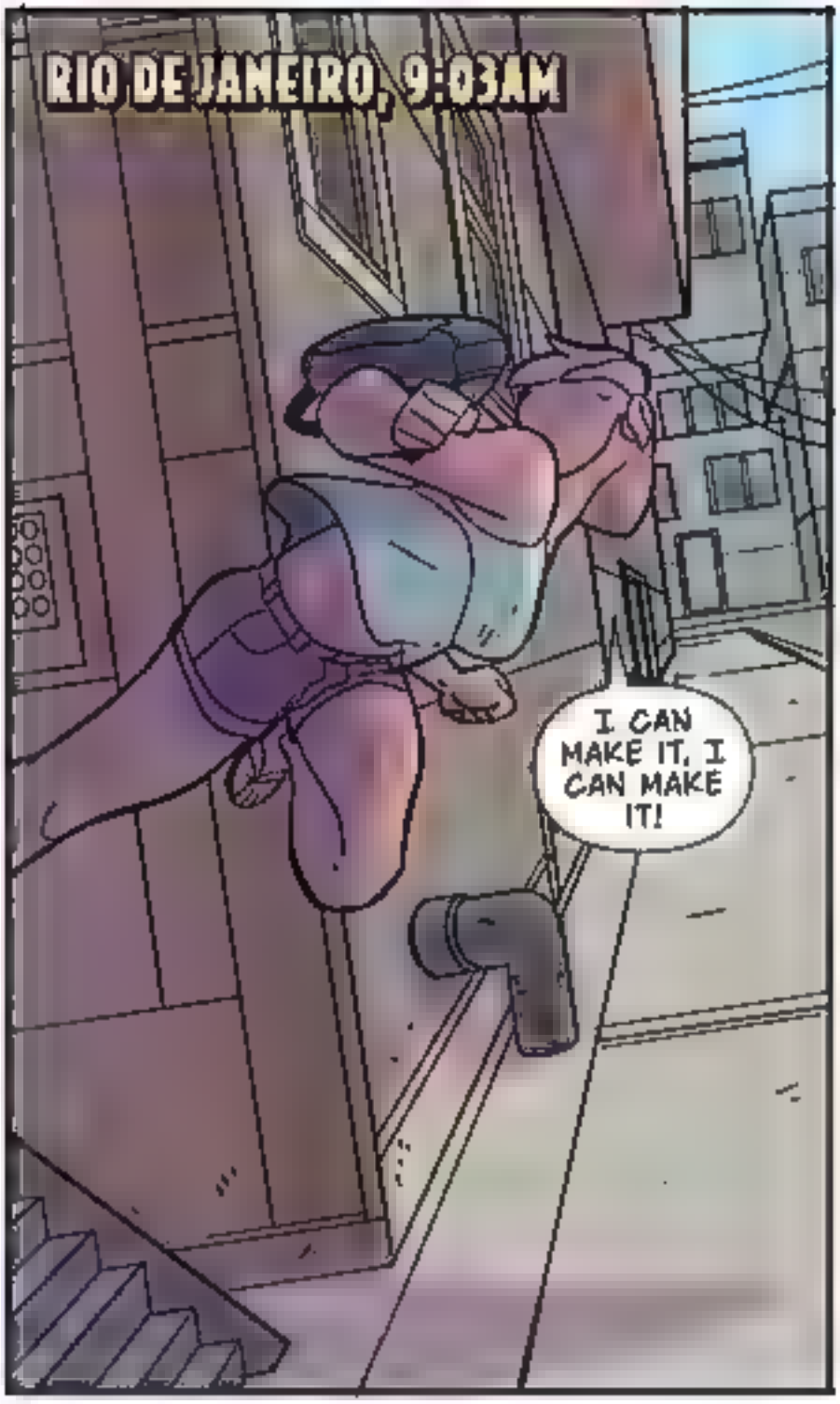

WELL. ANYWAY. WE'VE GOT GROWN UP WORK TO DO.
THE BRAZIL OFFICE IS PROBABLY UNDER SURVEILLANCE. WE'LL NEED TO GET IN AND OUT CRAZY FAST.
WE SHOULD SET UP A SAFE HOUSE. SOMEWHERE WE CAN LAY LOW AND PLAN OUR NEXT MOVE.
GOOD THINKING CAN YOU HANDLE THAT?
SURE. I'LL JUST ASK REAL NICE. AND THEN BUST SOME HEADS WHEN THAT DOESN'T WORK.
MEANWHILE I'LL GET IN GOOD WITH THE LOCAL HACKER SCENE.
OR BITCOINERS OR SPAMMER HIVES OR WHATEVER THE CRIMINAL COMPUTER NERDS DO AROUND HERE.
BERNARD, YOU'RE WITH ME.


NO. IT'S OVER.
BERNIE?
ROBO'S GONE. WITHOUT HIM WE'RE ACTION SCIENTISTS NO MORE.

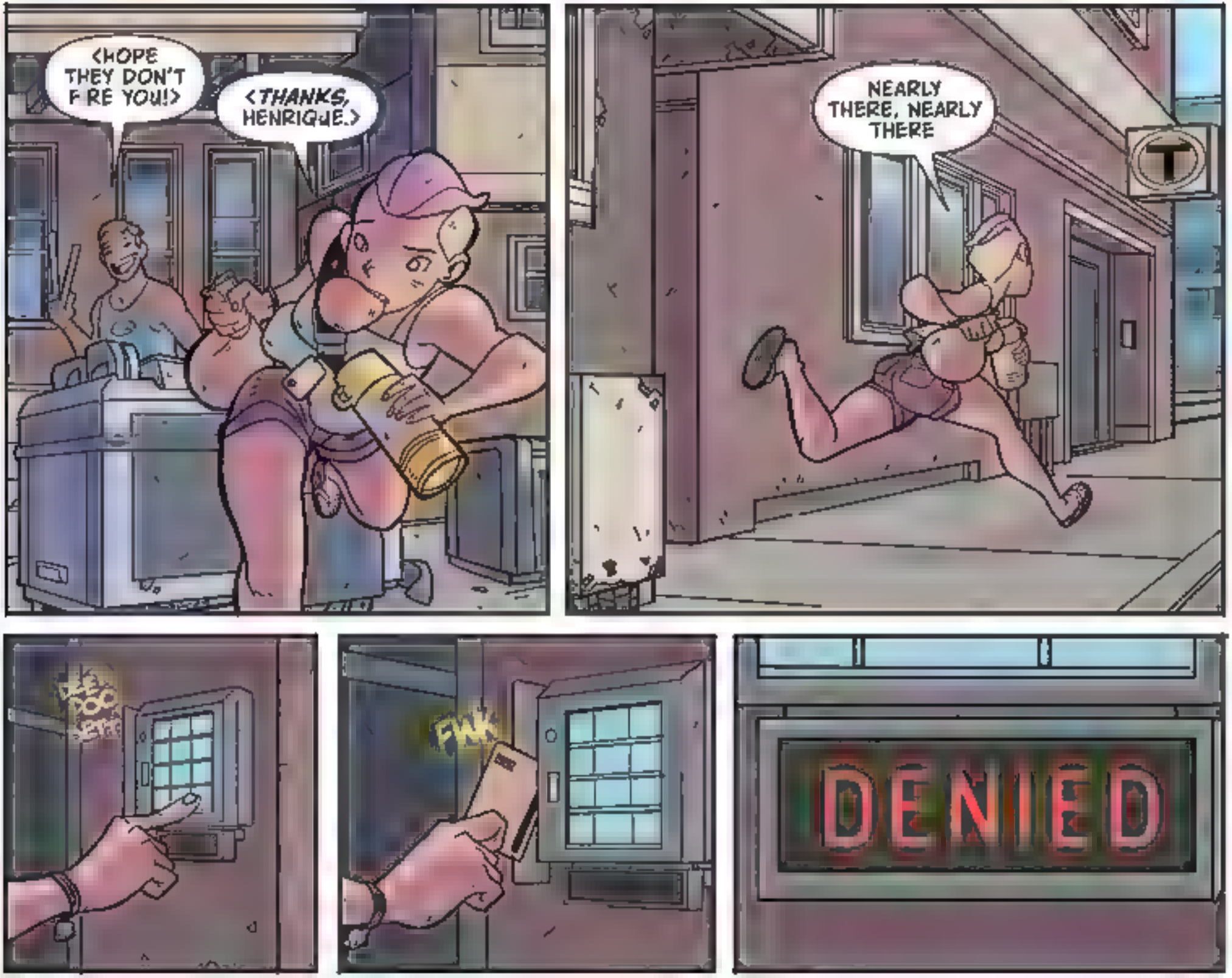
NEVER GONNA GIVE YOU UP
SNOOZE ALARM #3

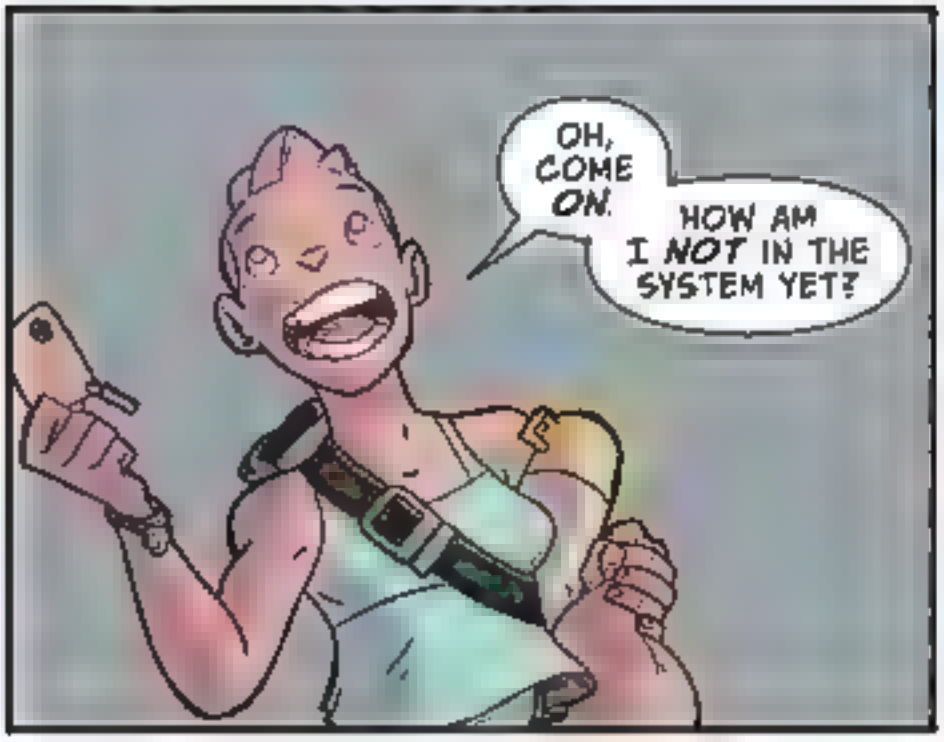

NEVER GONNA LET YOU DOWN

DAMMIT, SNOOZE ALARM!
NEVER GONNA RUN AROUND AND DESERT YOU

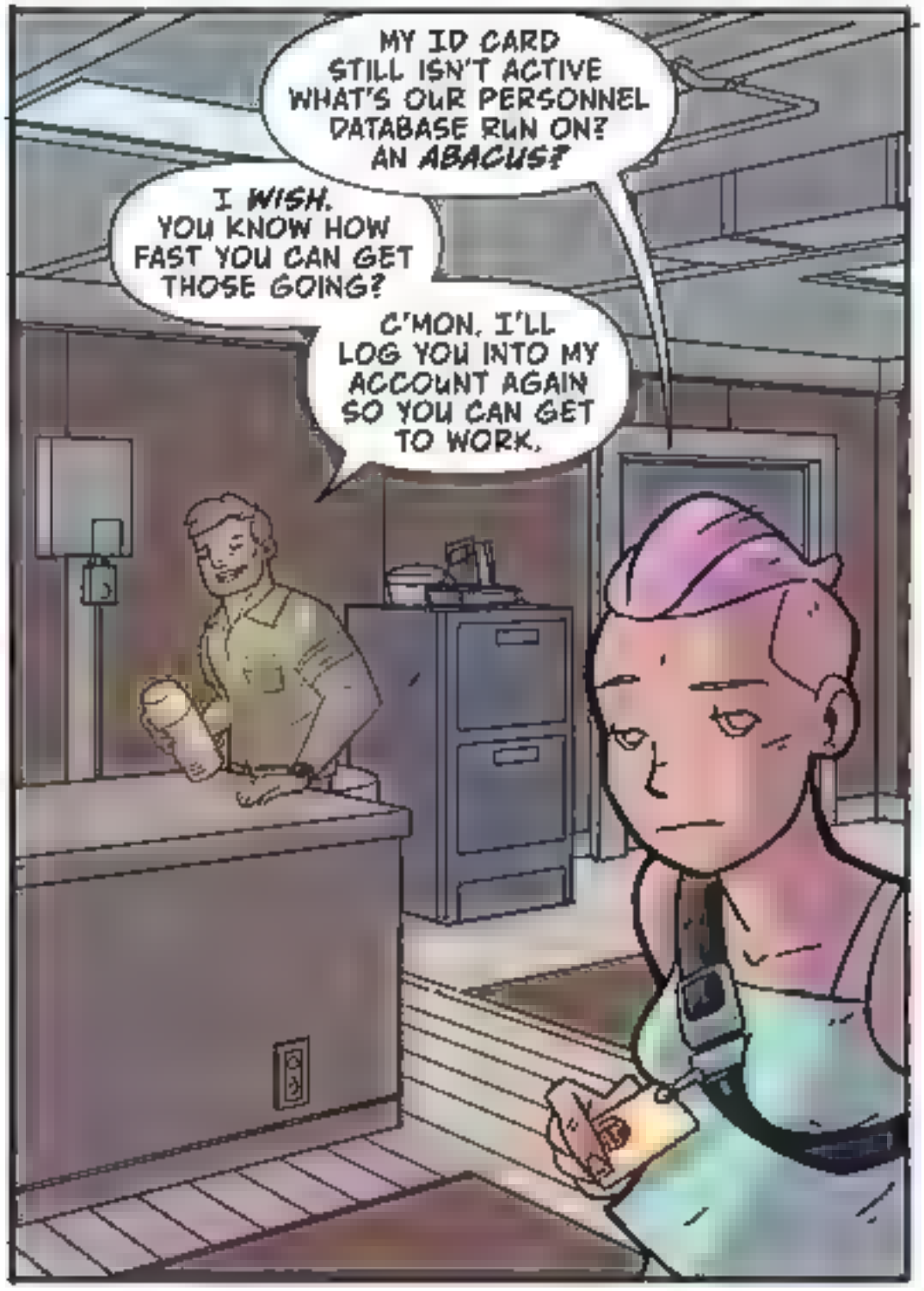

RIO DE JANEIRO, 9:03AM
I CAN MAKE IT, I CAN MAKE IT!

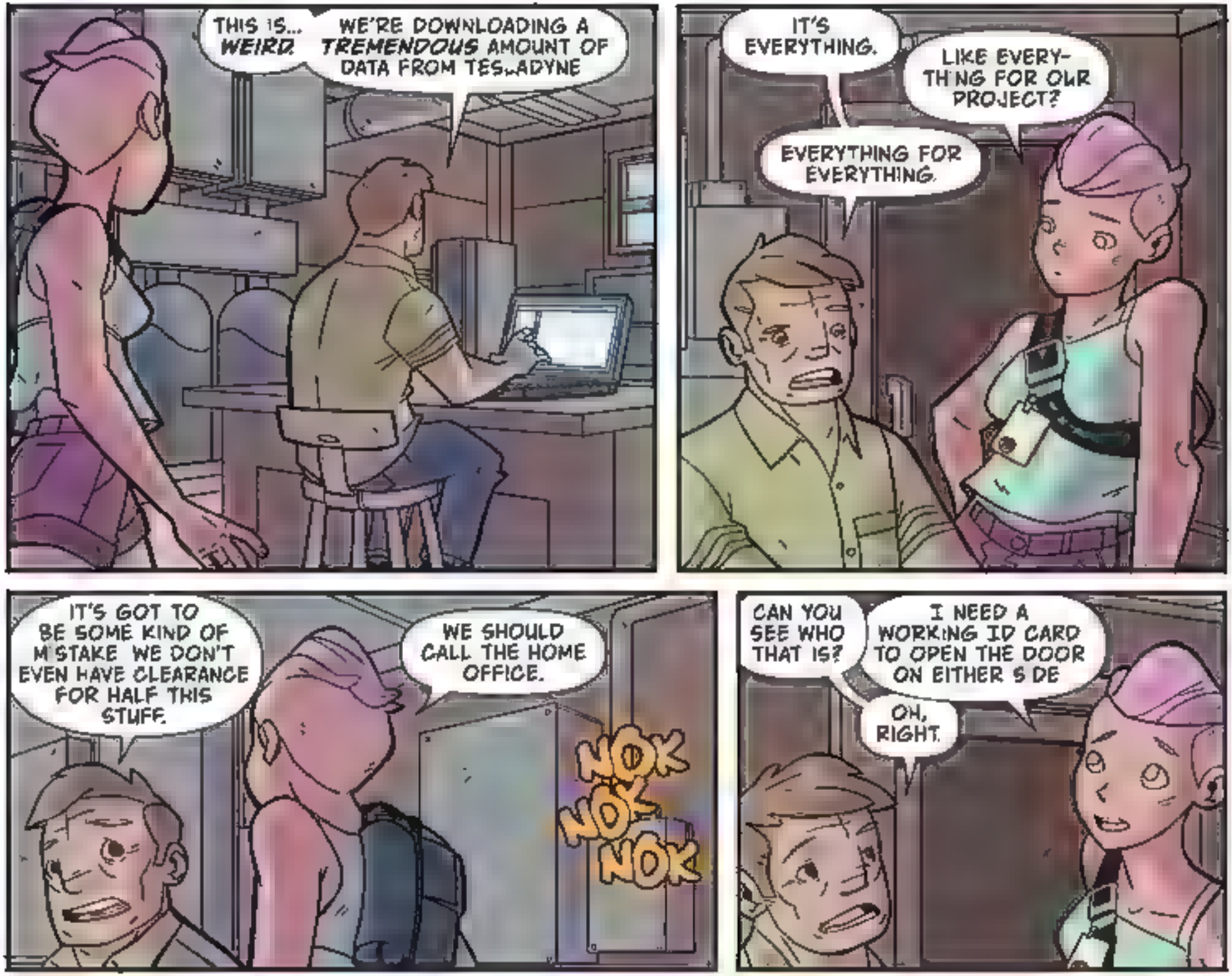
TESLADYNE FIELD STATION
TEN MINUTES AWAY AND ALREADY THREE MINUTES LATE

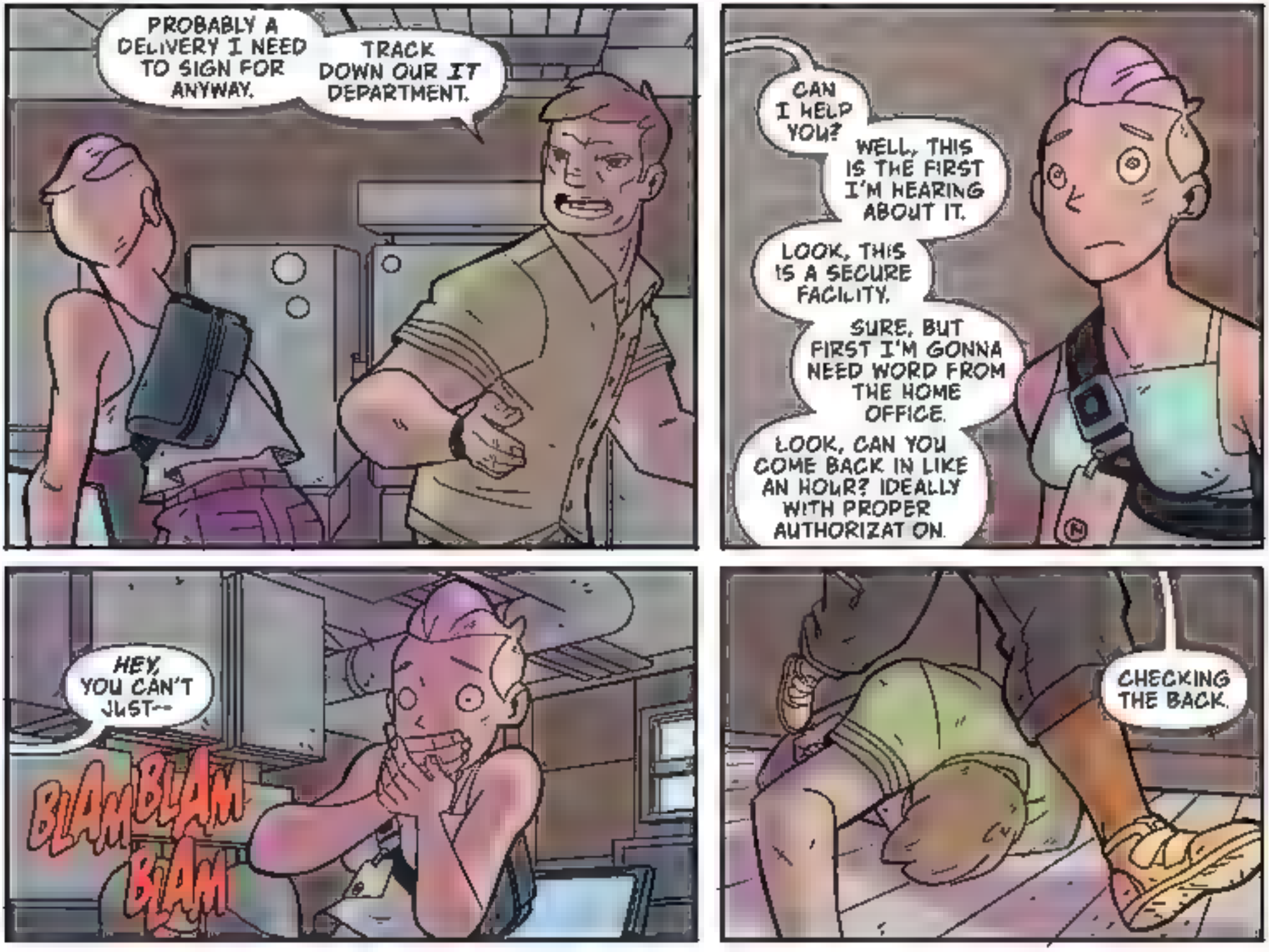

<HOPE THEY DON'T FIRE YOU!>
<THANKS, HENRIQUE.>
NEARLY THERE, NEARLY THERE
T
FWK
DENIED


OH, COME ON.
HOW AM I NOT IN THE SYSTEM YET?

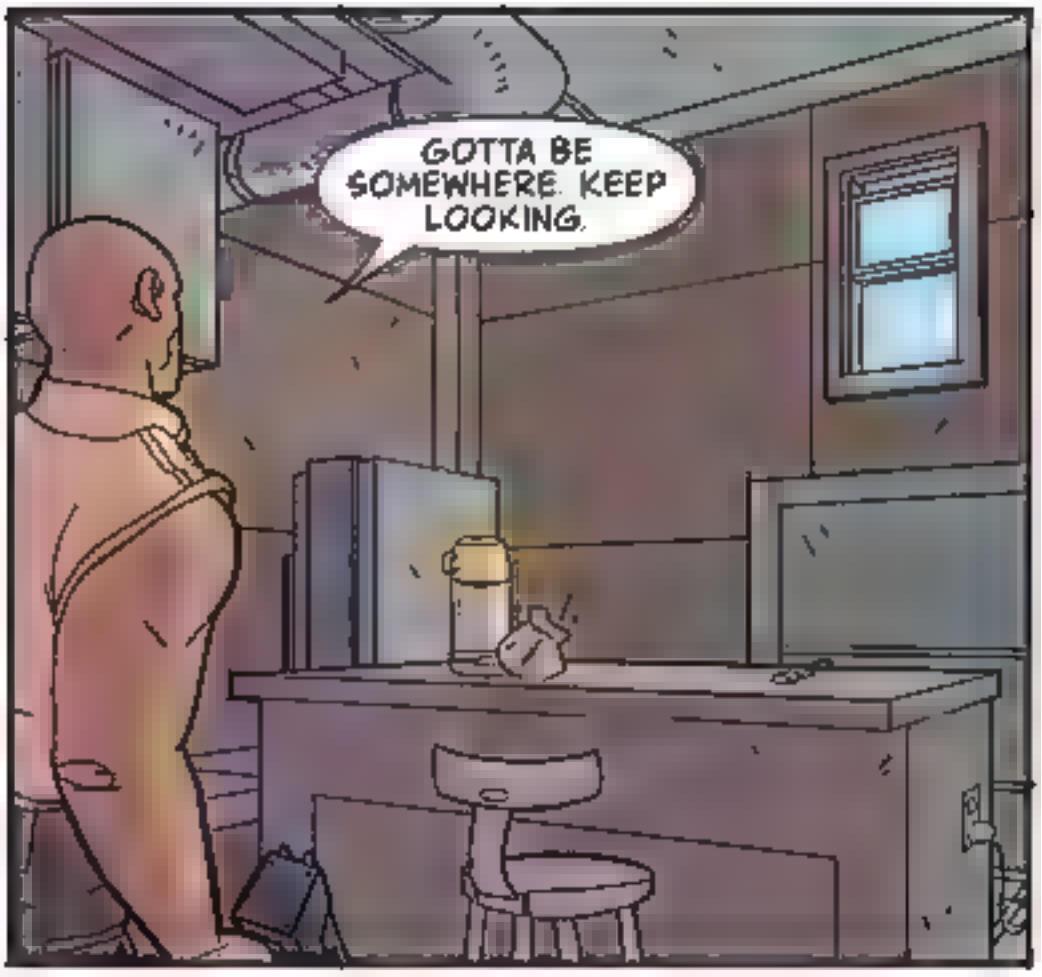
OH, UH. HEY, DR RUIZ
YOU'RE LATE. AGAIN.
BUT I BROUGHT SALGADINHOS AND COFFEE?
THEN YOU AREN'T FIRED.

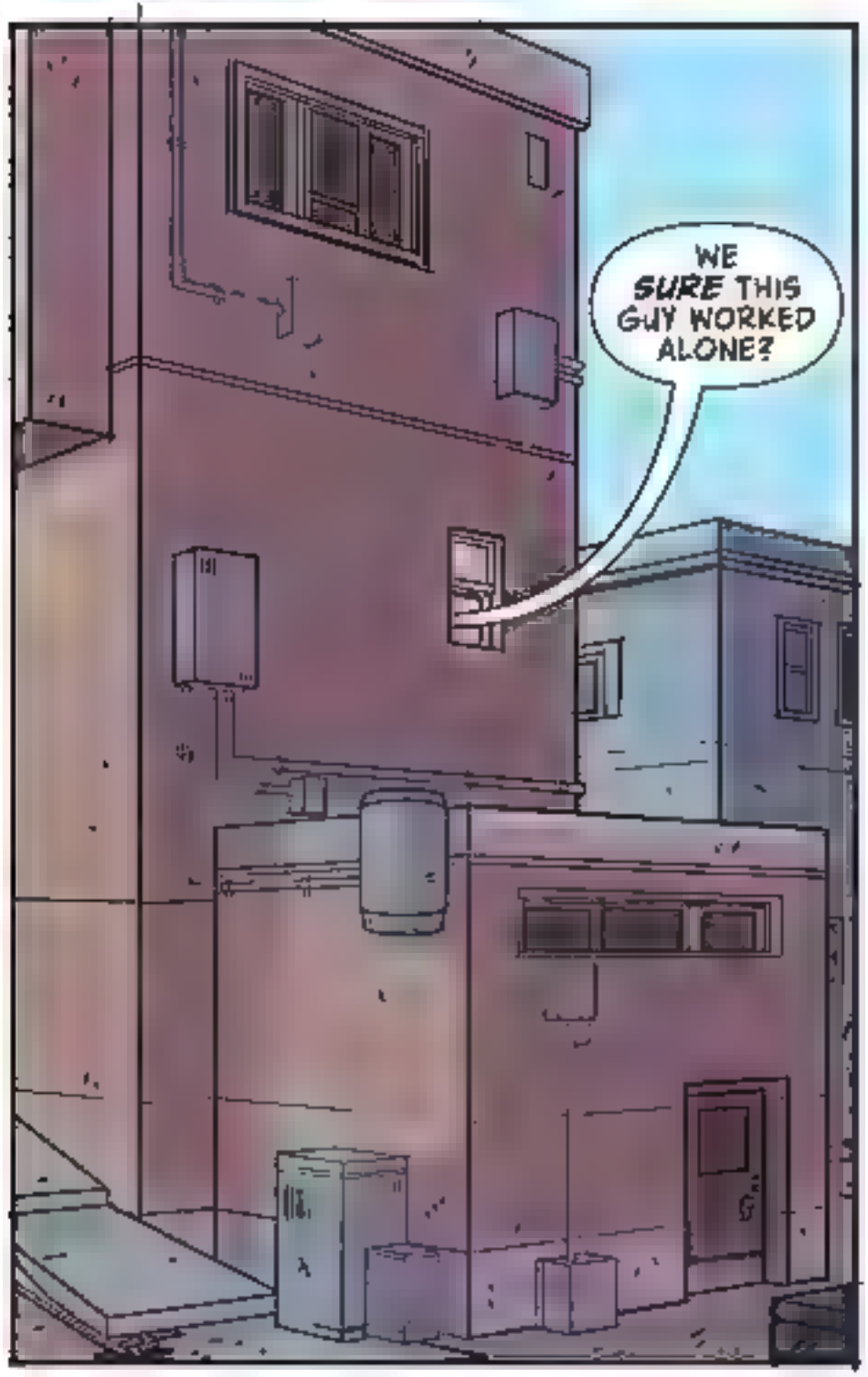

MY ID CARD STILL ISN'T ACTIVE WHAT'S OUR PERSONNEL DATABASE RUN ON? AN ABACUS?
I WISH. YOU KNOW HOW FAST YOU CAN GET THOSE GOING?
C'MON. I'LL LOG YOU INTO MY ACCOUNT AGAIN SO YOU CAN GET TO WORK.

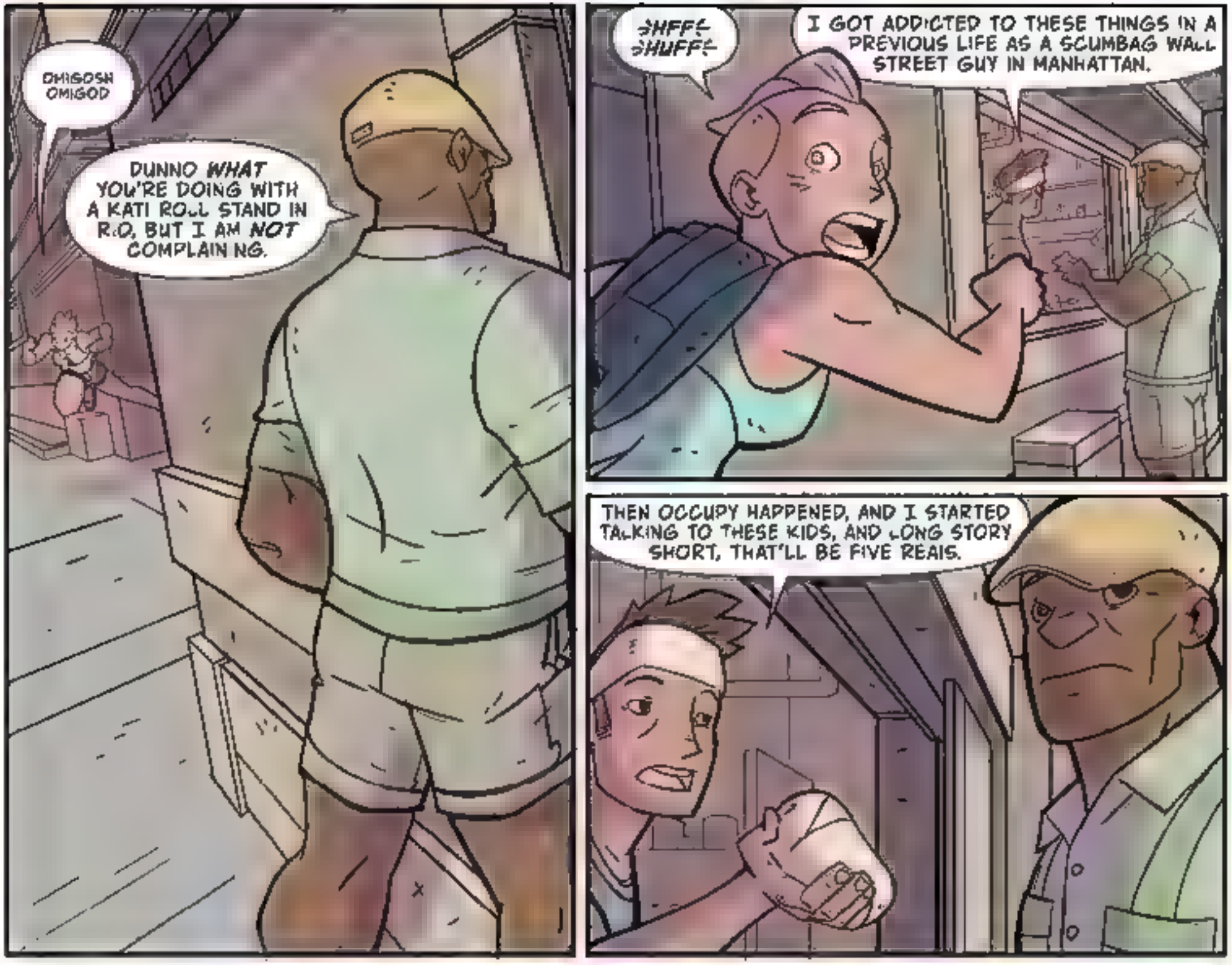

THIS IS... WEIRD.
WE'RE DOWNLOADING A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF DATA FROM TES..ADYNE
IT'S EVERYTHING.
LIKE EVERY-TH NG FOR OUR PROJECT?
EVERYTHING FOR EVERYTHING.
IT'S GOT TO BE SOME KIND OF M STAKE WE DON'T EVEN HAVE CLEARANCE FOR HALF THIS STUFF.
WE SHOULD CALL THE HOME OFFICE.
NOK NOK NOK
CAN YOU SEE WHO THAT IS?
I NEED A WORKING ID CARD TO OPEN THE DOOR ON EITHER S DE
OH, RIGHT.

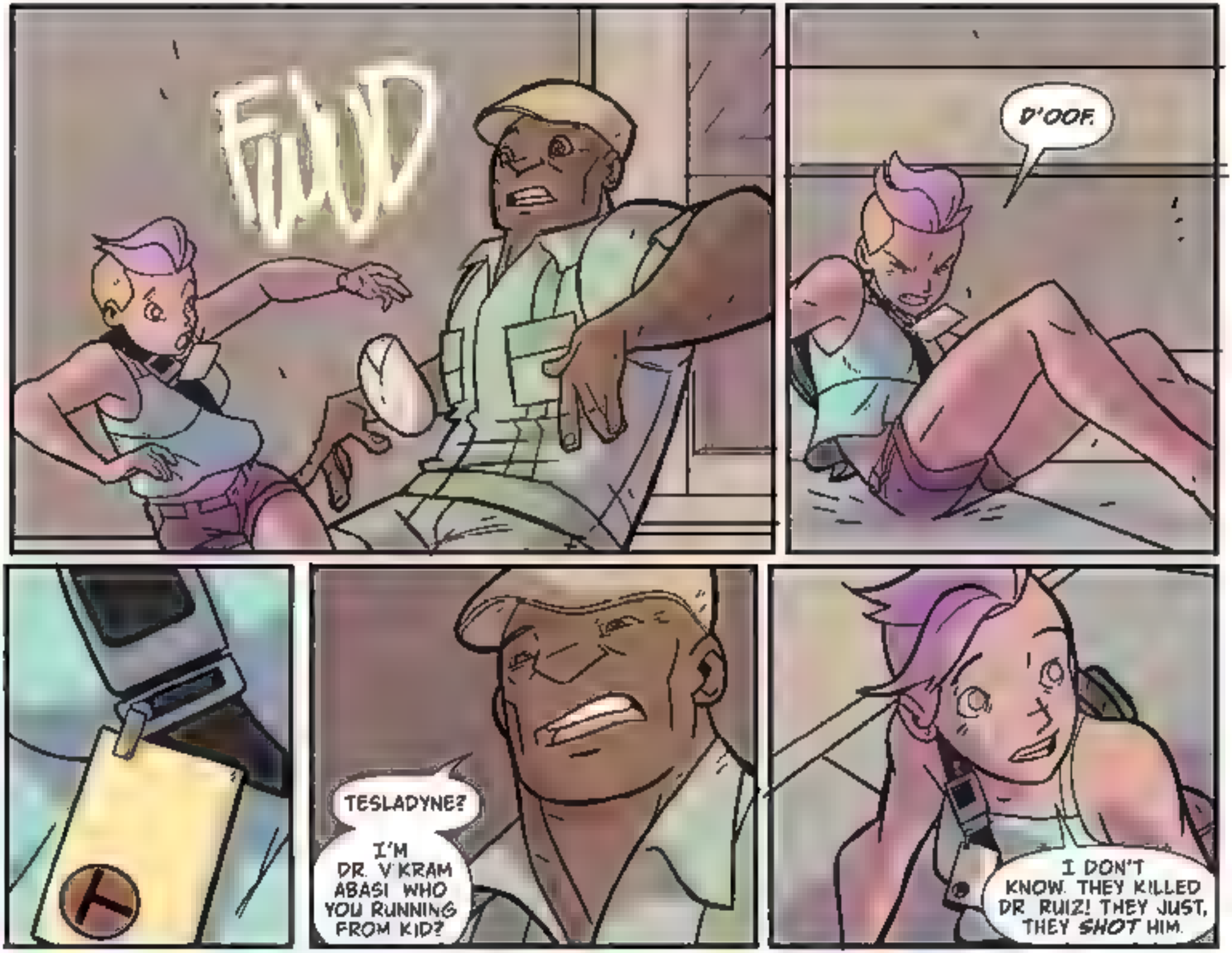

PROBABLY A DELIVERY I NEED TO SIGN FOR ANYWAY.
TRACK DOWN OUR IT DEPARTMENT.
CAN I HELP YOU?
WELL, THIS IS THE FIRST I'M HEARING ABOUT IT.
LOOK, THIS IS A SECURE FACILITY.
SURE, BUT FIRST I'M GONNA NEED WORD FROM THE HOME OFFICE.
LOOK, CAN YOU COME BACK IN LIKE AN HOUR? IDEALLY WITH PROPER AUTHORIZAT ON.
HEY, YOU CAN'T JUST--
BLAM BLAM BLAM
CHECKING THE BACK.

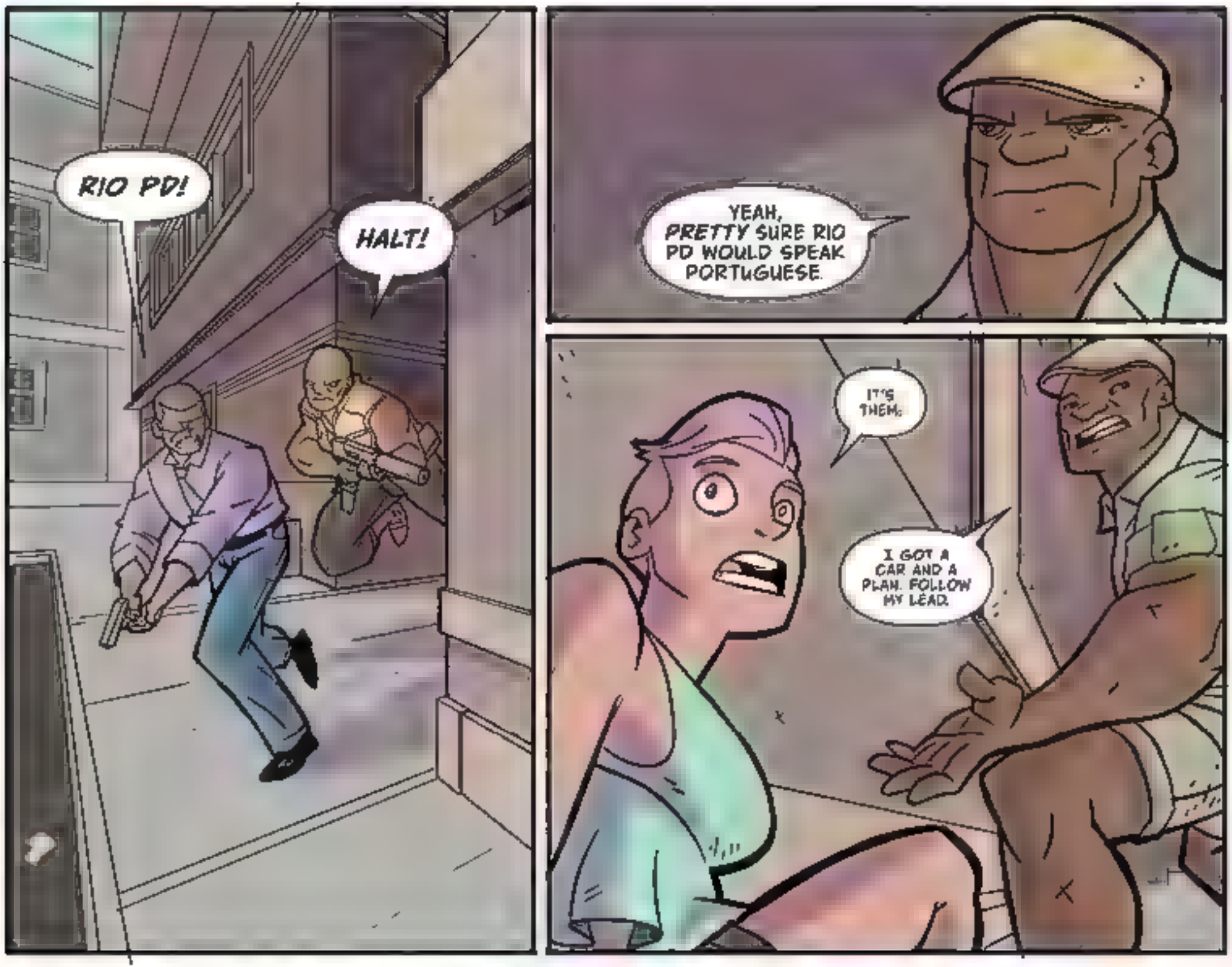
FWAM
COULDA TRIED THE HANDLE FIRST.
WE'RE CLEAR.
NO COMPUTER'S OUT HERE.
SAME.

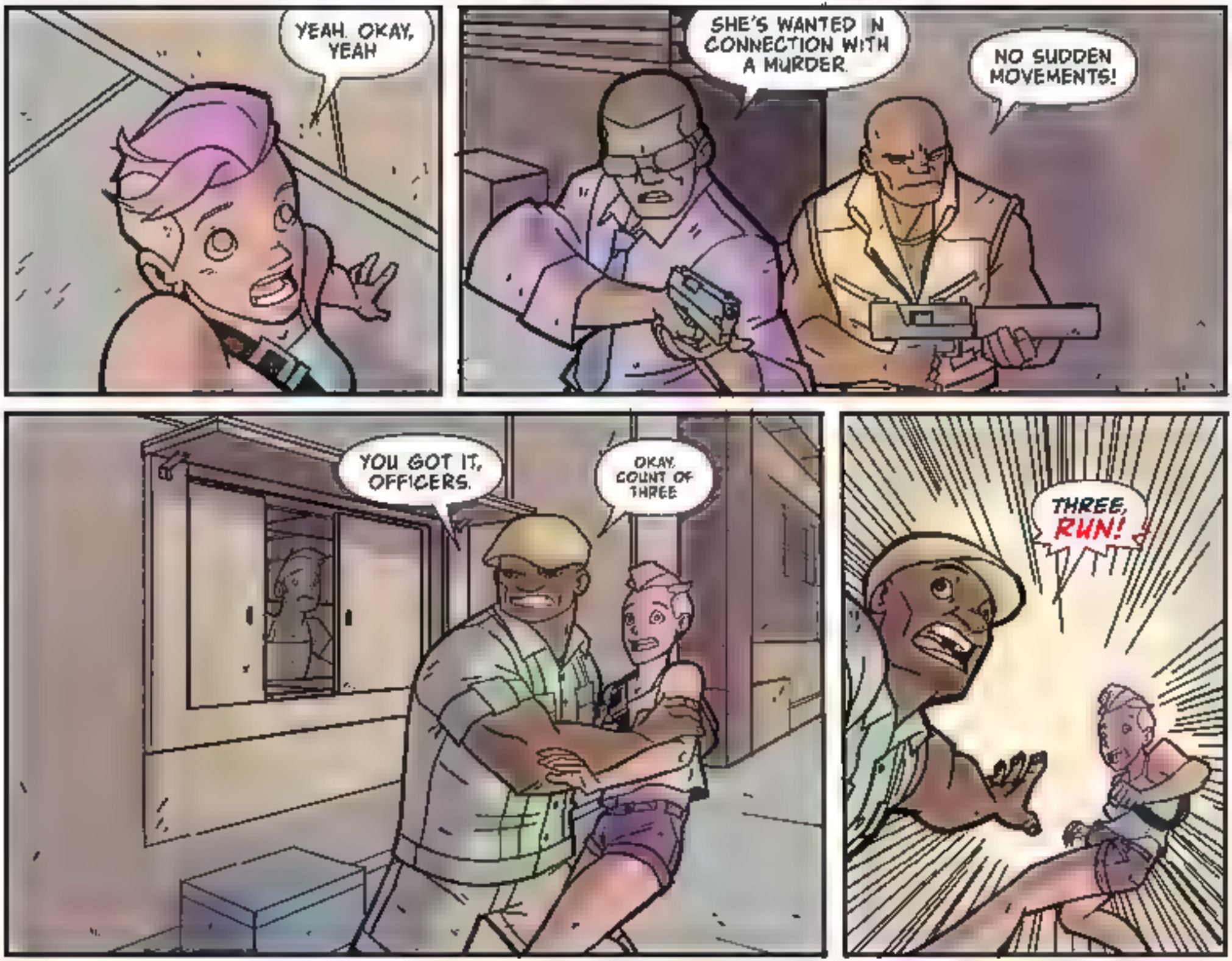

GOTTA BE SOMEWHERE. KEEP LOOKING.

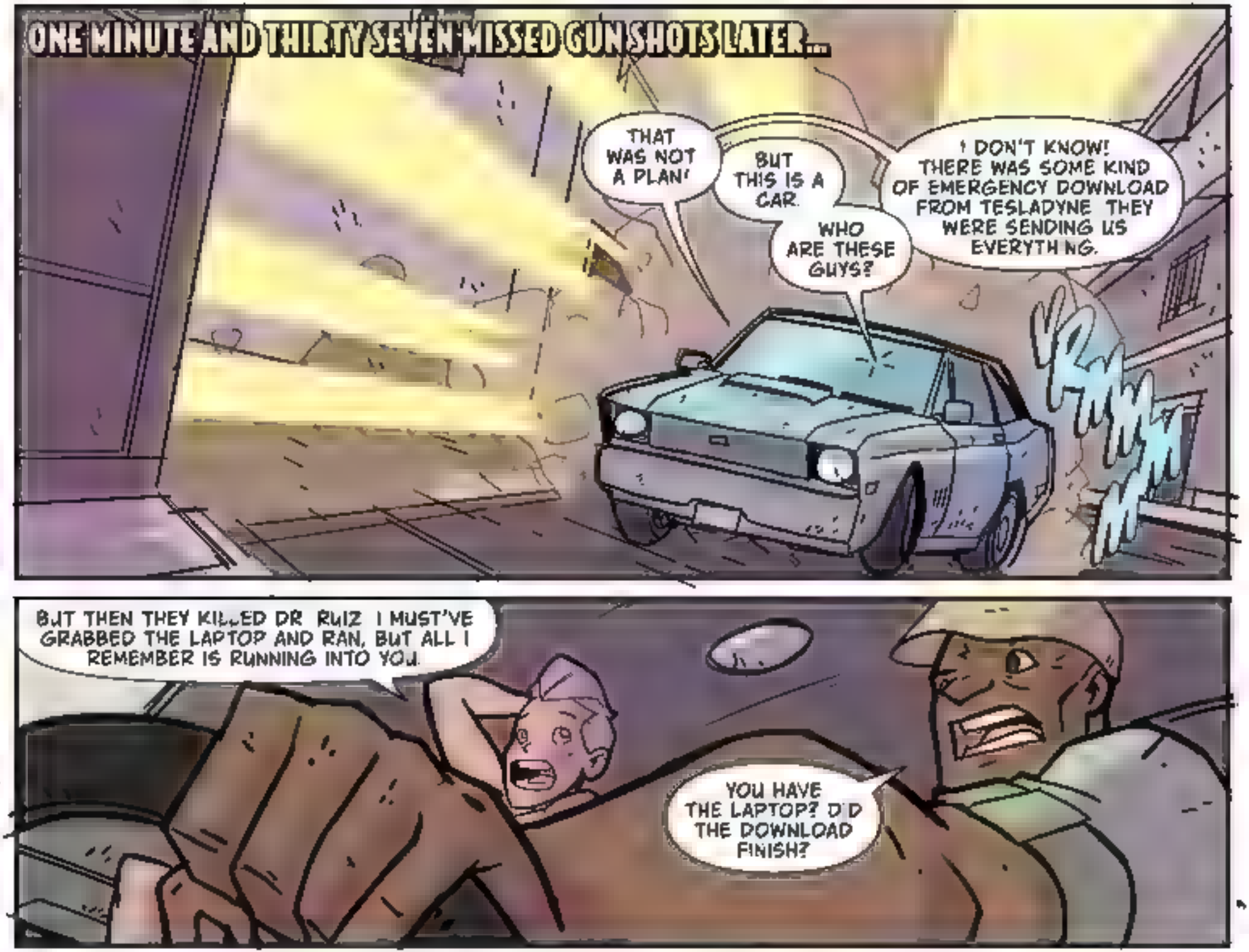

WE *SURE* THIS GUY WORKED ALONE?

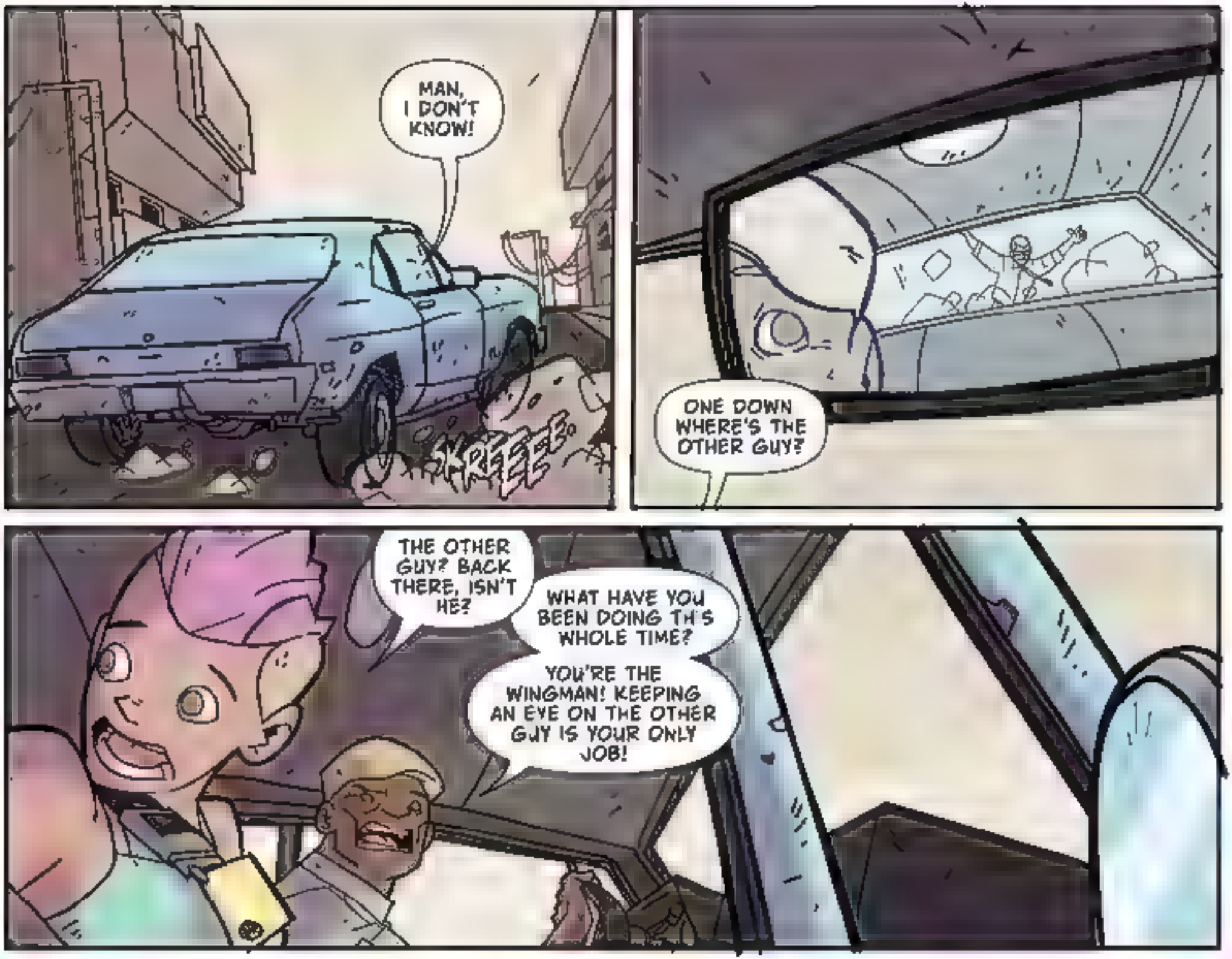

OMIGOSH OMIGOD
DUNNO WHAT YOU'RE DOING WITH A KATI ROLL STAND IN R.O, BUT I AM NOT COMPLAIN NG.
SHFF SHUFF
I GOT ADDICTED TO THESE THINGS IN A PREVIOUS LIFE AS A SCUMBAG WALL STREET GUY IN MANHATTAN.
THEN OCCUPY HAPPENED, AND I STARTED TALKING TO THESE KIDS, AND LONG STORY SHORT, THAT'LL BE FIVE REAIS.


FWUD
D'OOF.
TESLADYNE?
I'M DR. V'KRAM ABASI WHO YOU RUNNING FROM KID?
I DON'T KNOW. THEY KILLED DR. RUIZ! THEY JUST, THEY SHOT HIM.

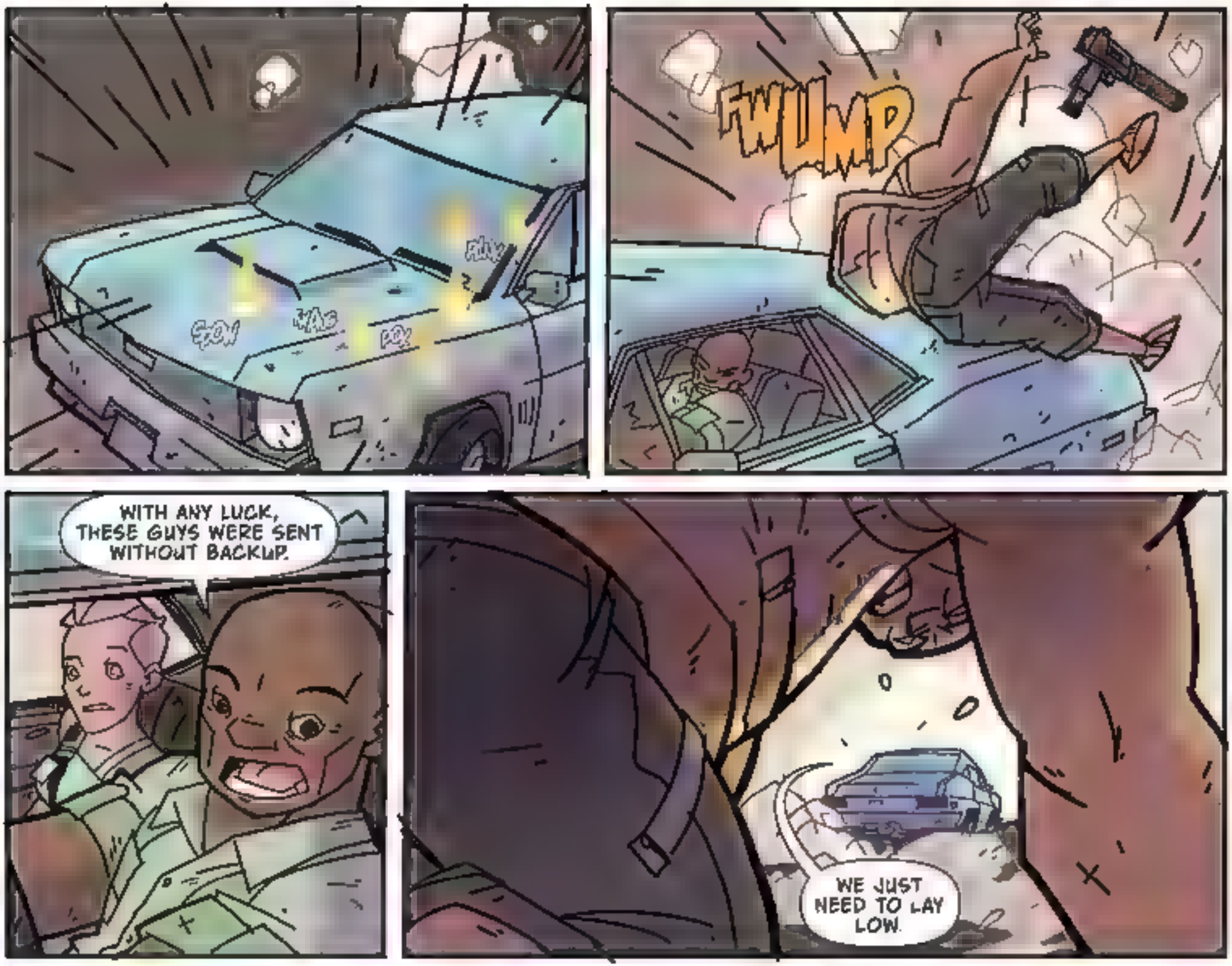

RIO PD!
HALT!
YEAH, PRETTY SURE RIO PD WOULD SPEAK PORTUGUESE.
IT'S THEM.
I GOT A CAR AND A PLAN. FOLLOW MY LEAD.

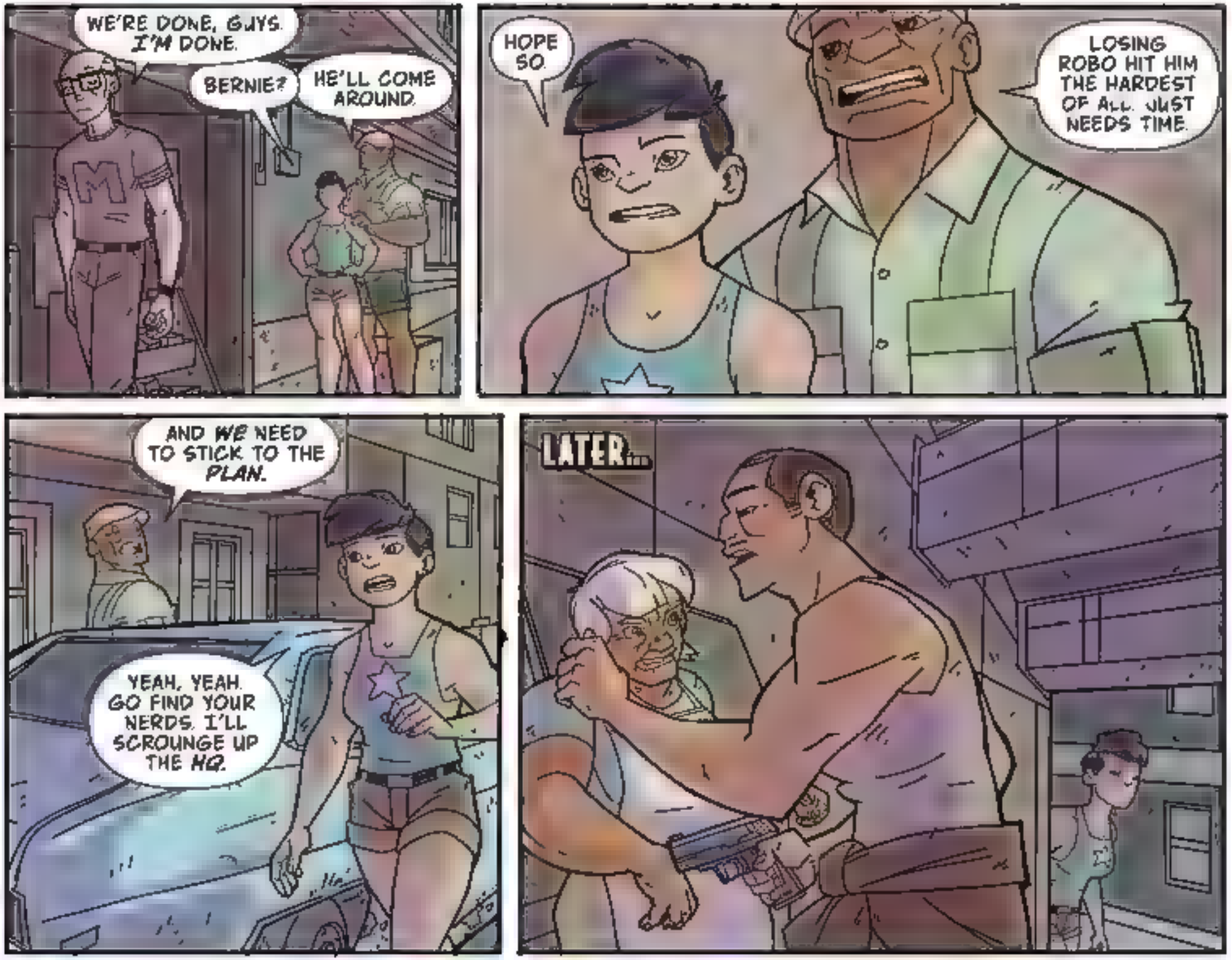

YEAH. OKAY, YEAH
SHE'S WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH A MURDER.
NO SUDDEN MOVEMENTS!
YOU GOT IT, OFFICERS.
OKAY. COUNT OF THREE
THREE, RUN!


ONE MINUTE AND THIRTY SEVEN MISSED GUN SHOTS LATER...
THAT WAS NOT A PLAN!
BUT THIS IS A CAR.
WHO ARE THESE GUYS?
I DON'T KNOW! THERE WAS SOME KIND OF EMERGENCY DOWNLOAD FROM TESLADYNE THEY WERE SENDING US EVERYTH NG.
BUT THEN THEY KILLED DR RUIZ I MUST'VE GRABBED THE LAPTOP AND RAN, BUT ALL I REMEMBER IS RUNNING INTO YOU.
YOU HAVE THE LAPTOP? D'D THE DOWNLOAD FINISH?

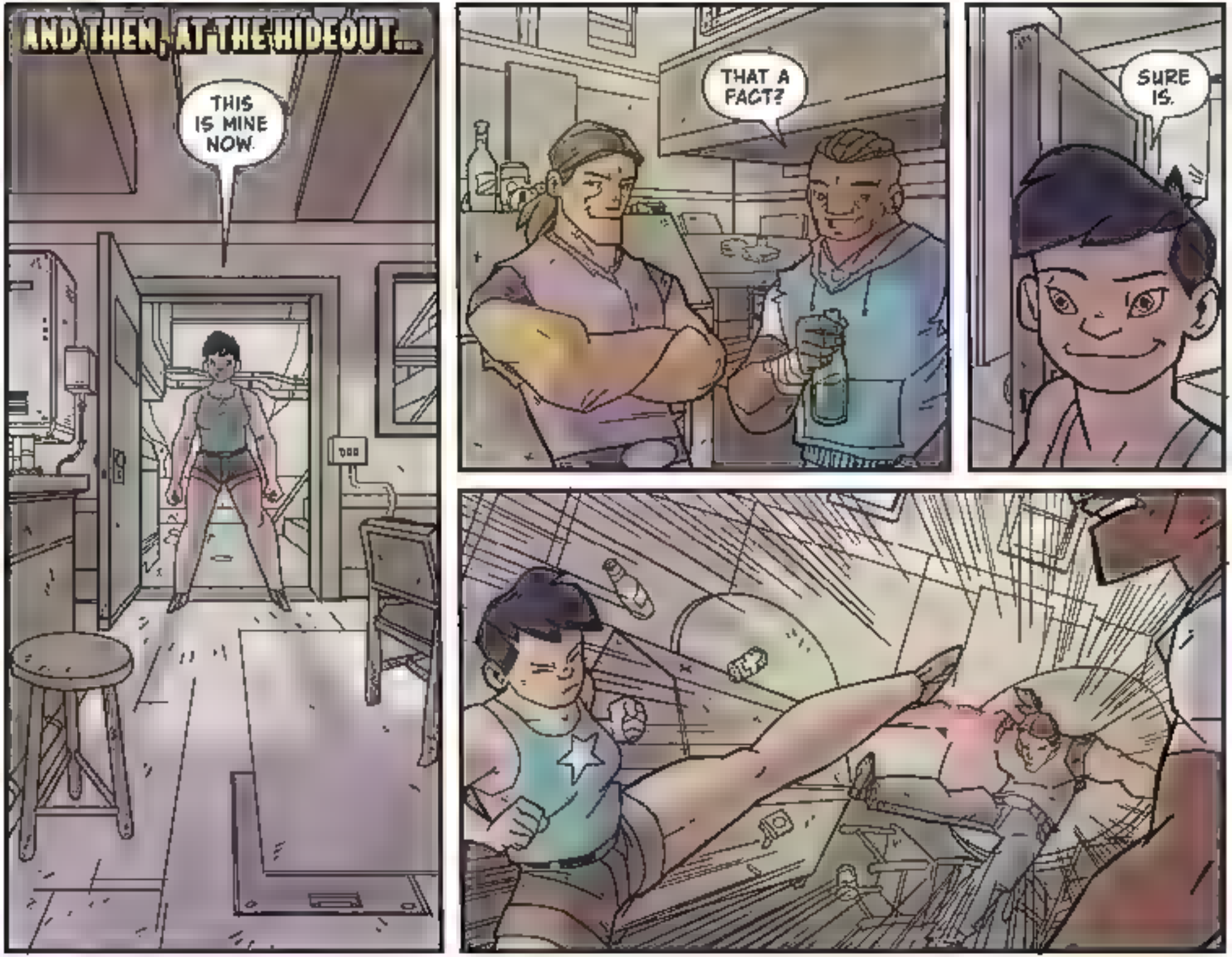

MAN, I DON'T KNOW!
SKREEE
ONE DOWN WHERE'S THE OTHER GUY?
THE OTHER GUY? BACK THERE, ISN'T HE?
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING THIS WHOLE TIME?
YOU'RE THE WINGMAN! KEEPING AN EYE ON THE OTHER GUY IS YOUR ONLY JOB!

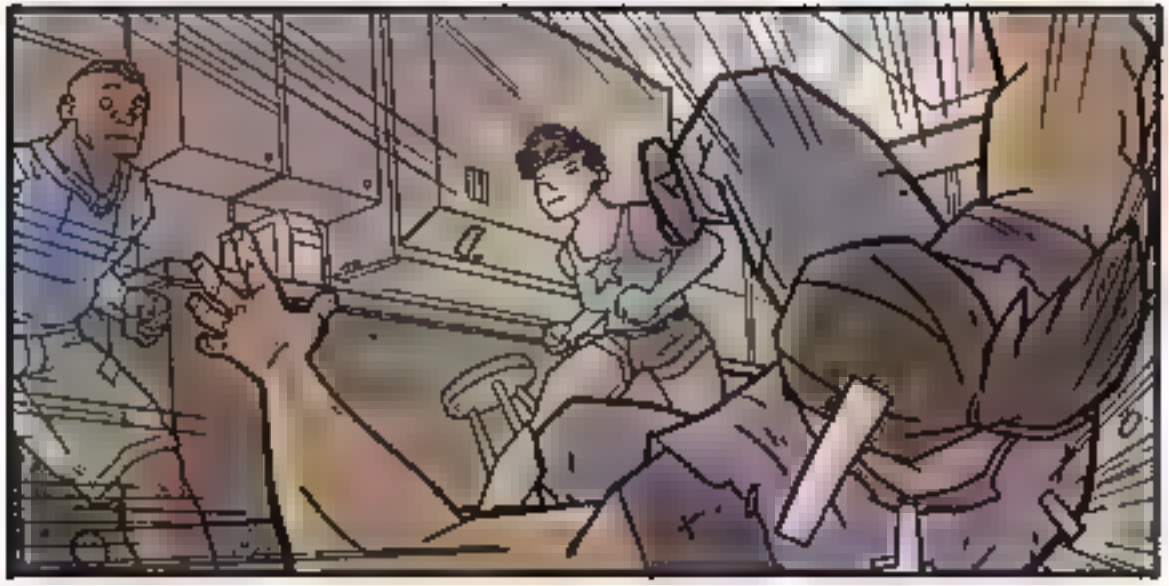
UH. FOUND HIM.
BRRRRAP
AHHHH!

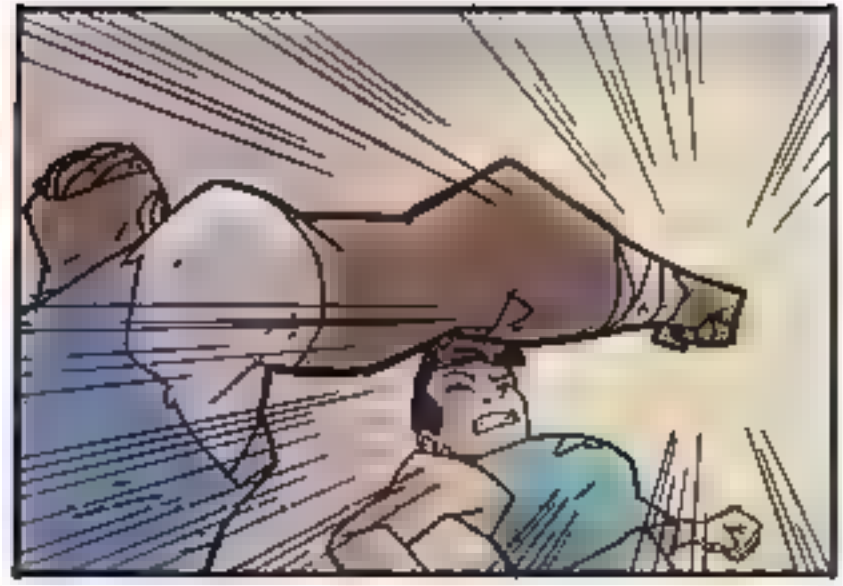

FWUMP
WITH ANY LUCK, THESE GUYS WERE SENT WITHOUT BACKUP.
WE JUST NEED TO LAY LOW.

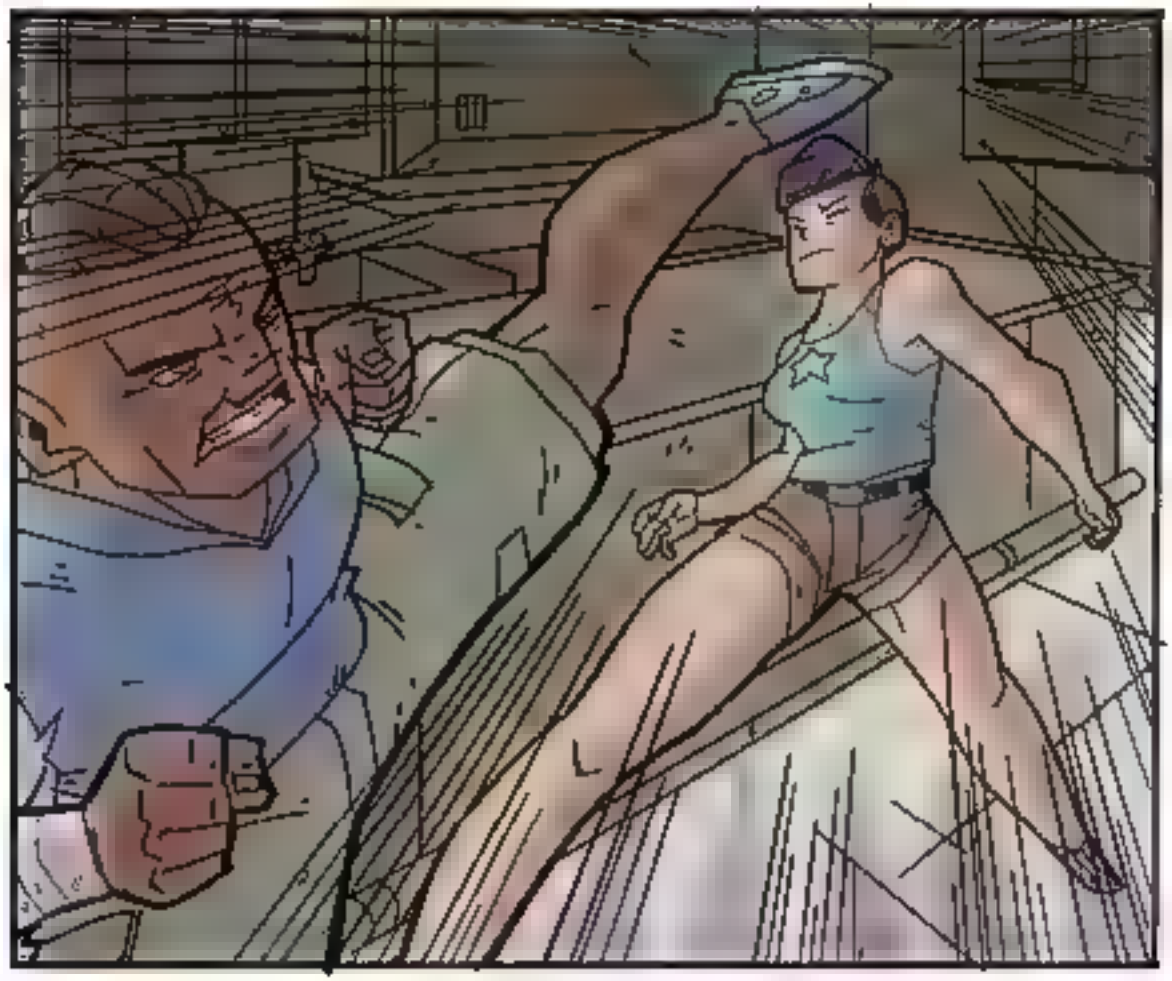

WE'RE DONE, GUYS. I'M DONE.
BERNIE?
HE'LL COME AROUND.
HOPE SO.
LOSING ROBO HIT HIM THE HARDEST OF ALL. JUST NEEDS TIME.
AND WE NEED TO STICK TO THE PLAN.
YEAH, YEAH. GO FIND YOUR NERDS. I'LL SCROUNGE UP THE HQ.
LATER...

MUST BE A PRETTY ROUGH PART OF TOWN IF YOU NEED A GUN TO HOLD UP SOMEONE'S GRANDMA.
MY GANG OWNS TH S PART OF TOWN
Y'EVER HEAR OF THE "TWENTY-ONE FOOT" RULE?
WHAT?
DOESN'T MATTER. I'M A LOT CLOSER THAN THAT.
SO. YOUR GANG HAVE A HIDEOUT?


AND THEN, AT THE HIDEOUT...
THIS IS MINE NOW.
THAT A FACT?
SURE IS.





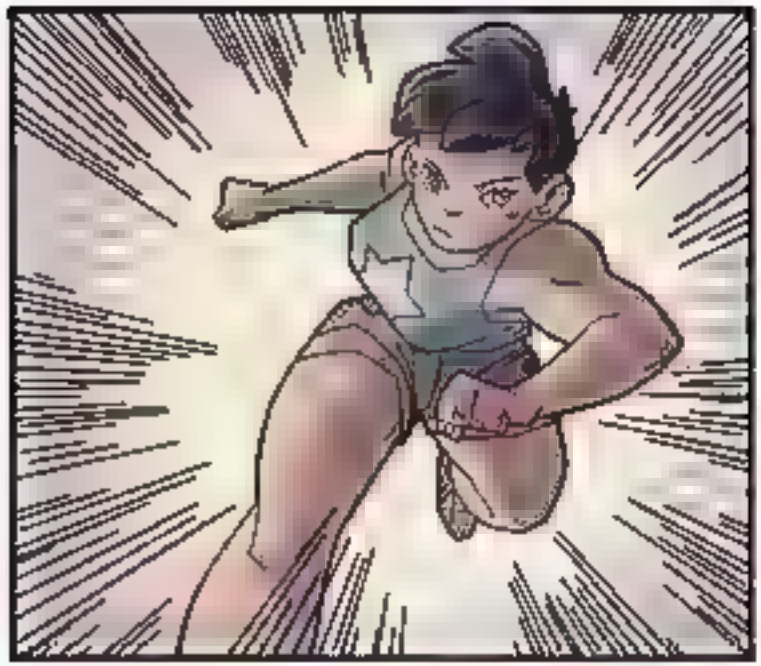


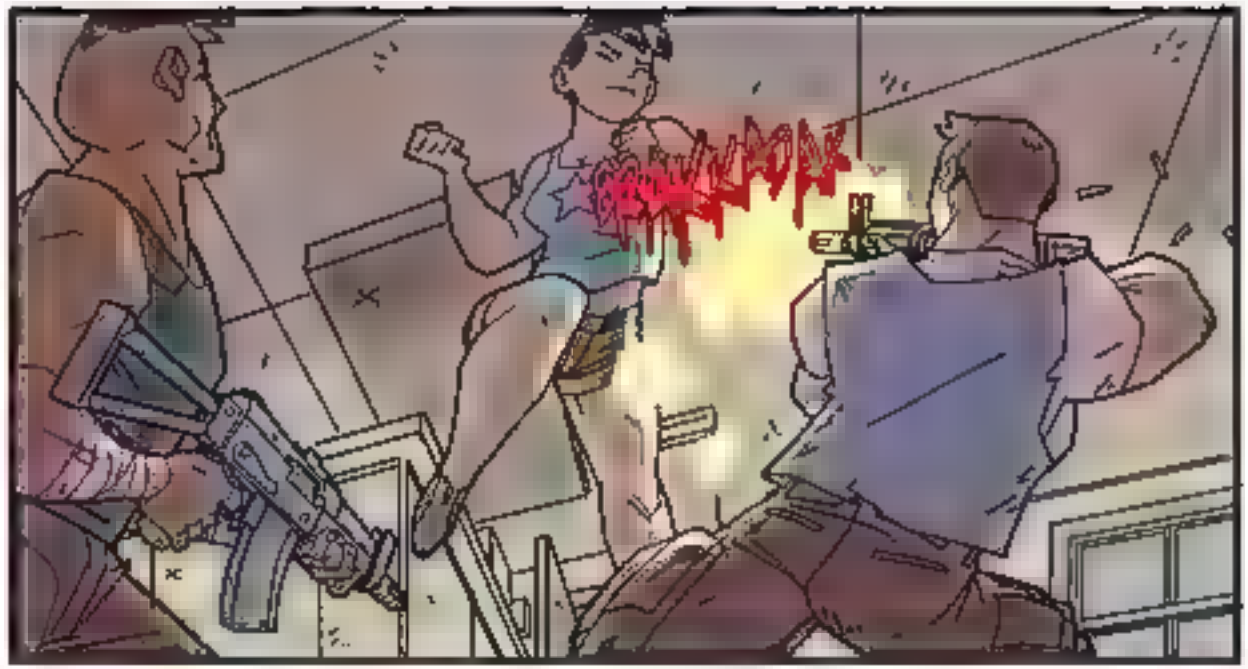
THE HELL IS GOING ON DOWN HERE?

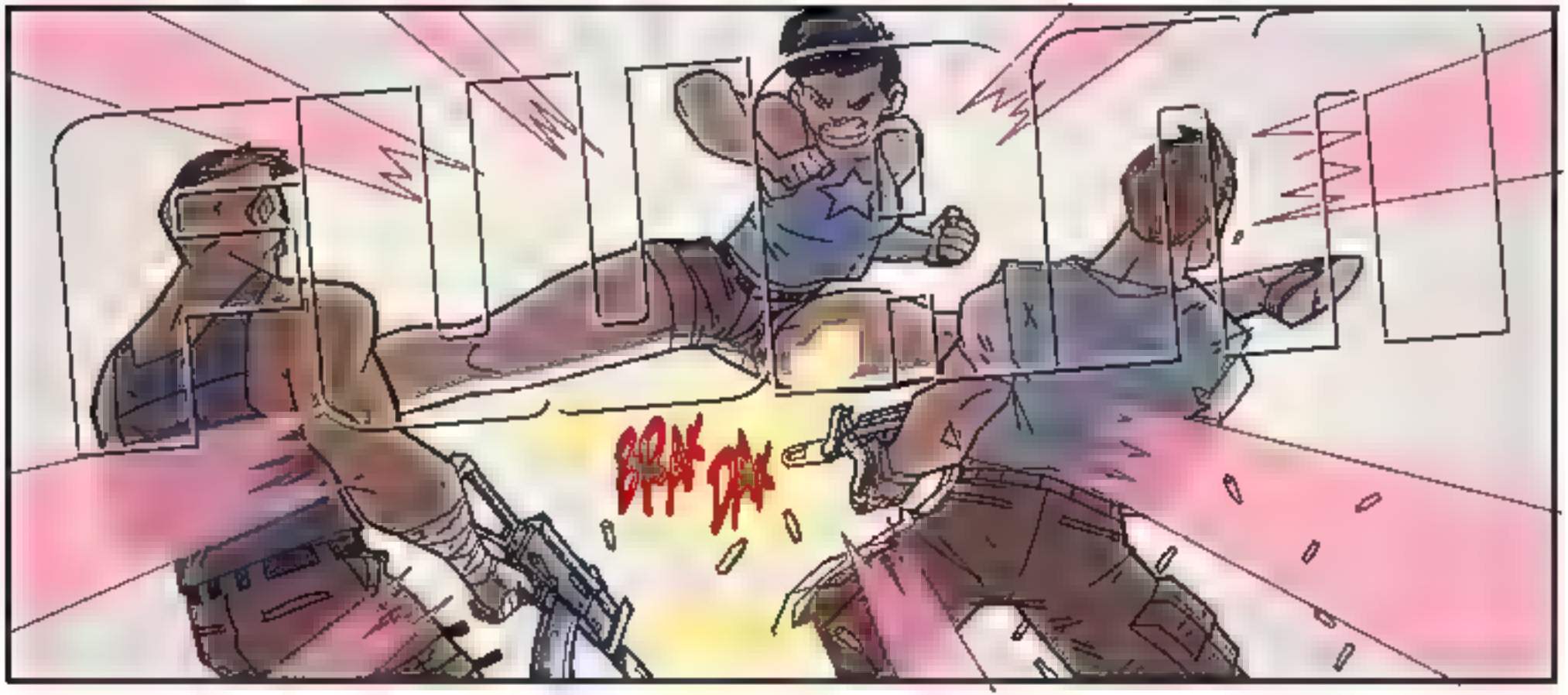
THE HELL ARE YOU?

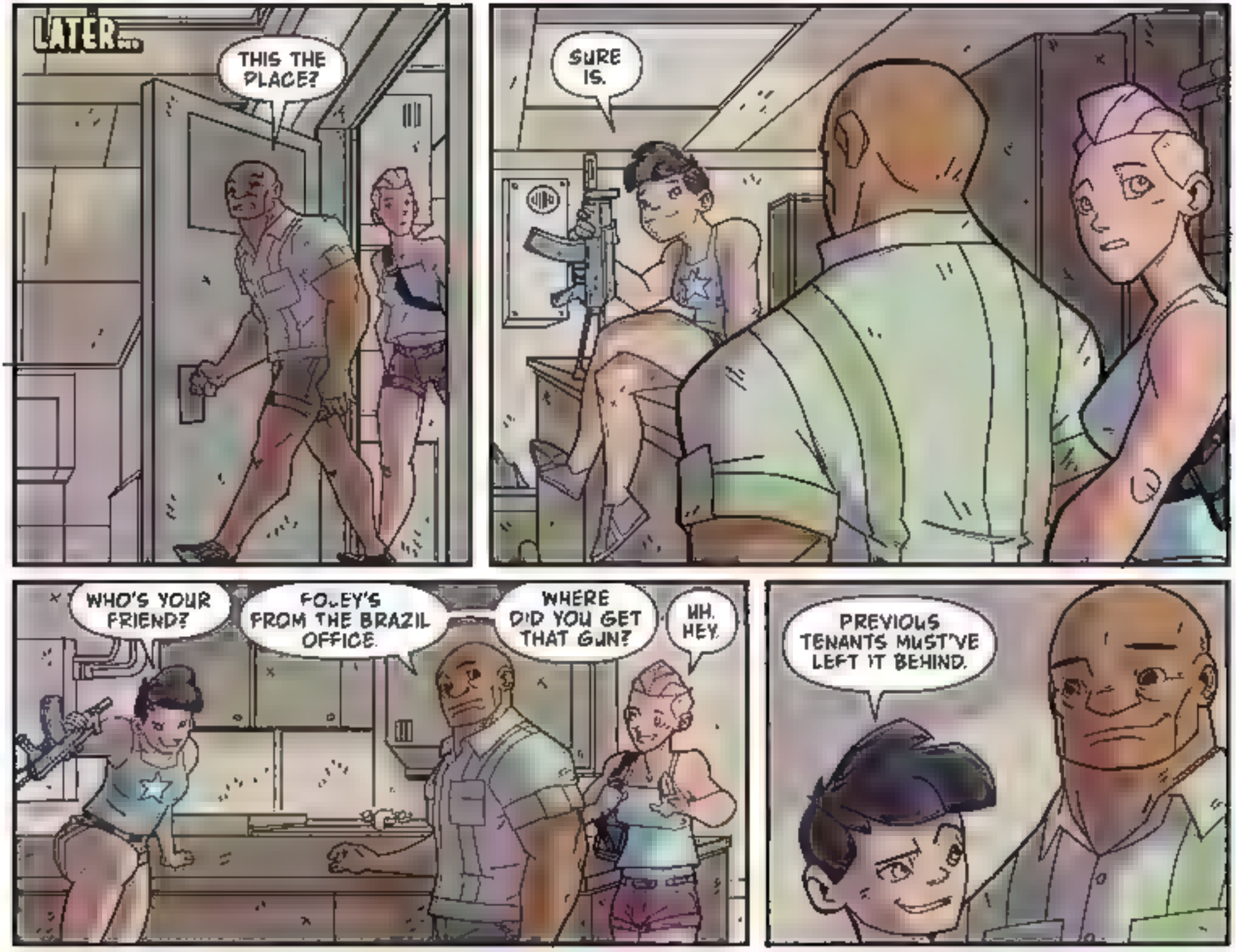
THE NEW OWNER.
I'LL THANK YOU TO LEAVE

NO, WE WON'T BE DOING THAT.






BRAK DAK


LATER...
THIS THE PLACE?
SURE IS.
WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?
FOLEY'S FROM THE BRAZIL OFFICE.
WHERE DID YOU GET THAT GUN?
UH. HEY.
PREVIOUS TENANTS MUST'VE LEFT IT BEHIND.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENCE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE!
ATOMIC ROBO
DEAD
ATOMIC ROBO
DEAD
JENKINS
IN CUSTODY
BIRCH
IN CUSTODY
KOA
DEAD
LANG
DEAD
ABASI
UNKNOWN
ATTENTION!
YOU ARE NOW
LEAVING A
BROUGHTON
DEAD
FISCHER
IN CUSTODY
SMITHFIELD
THE RING OF FIRE
CLEVINGER WEGENER CLARK POWELL

--CONTROVERSIAL S.E.C.U.R.E. ACT THAT **RADICALLY** BROADENED TESLADYNE'S OPERATIONAL AUTHORITY UNDER--

TOKYO, JAPAN

THE SCIENTIFIC EMERGENCY AND CONTAINMENT UNITED RESPON

--"ULTRA," AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL TASK FORCE WITH TIES TO OVER A DOZEN AGENCIES, NOTABLY THE NSA AND DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

TOKYO, JAPAN

ONSE EXPERTS ACT OF 2013 PASSED WITH BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IN

CHINESE AND RUSSIAN OFFICIALS HAVE DECRIED ULTRA'S LATEST INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AS, QUOTE, "AN AFFRONT TO SOVEREIGNTY."

THE WAKE OF TESLADYNE COMING UNI

JULY, 2015

ULTRA PERSONNEL CONTINUE THEIR SURVEY OF THE HASHIMA QUARANTINE ZONE. MEANWHILE, ATOMIC ROBO REMAINS AT LARGE.

HE'SH **DEAD.**

I SHEEN 'IM DEAD.

I WUZ **THERE.**

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR'S NOT AT THE BOTTOM OF A GLASS, BERNARD.

=GULP=

BOTTOM OF TH' NEXSHT ONE?

KUNK

AAAAND WHERE YOU *BEEN,* LANG?

IT WAS *YOUR* IDEA TO SPLIT UP.

YEAH.

WELL. THAT'S WHERE I'VE BEEN.

OKAY THEN, *SHMART GUY.* HOW'D YOU FIND ME?

BECAUSE MEXICO

GEE, DUNNO HOW *ANYONE* COULD PICK YOU OUT OF THIS CROWD.

POOL

OKAY. *BUT!*

WHERE YOU *BEEN* THOUGH?

WE *JUST* WENT OVER THAT.

AINCHU GOT 'N ANSWER FOR *EVERY-THING.*

YES. AND THE ANSWER RIGHT *NOW* IS TO GET YOU OUTTA HERE.

I'M NOT GOIN' *NOWHERE.*

WHERE WE GOIN'?

WHERE YOU CAN DRY OUT AND BE USEFUL AGAIN.

I'M NO GOOD FOR *NUTHIN'* 'CAUSE ROBO'S DEAD.

WHY THE HELL YOU THINK I'M GETTING THE BAND BACK TOGETHER?

WE CAN BRING HIM *BACK.*

MMMMM

MMMV

ROCINHA, RIO DE JANEIRO
THE NEXT WEEK

WHAT DO YOU NEED SO MUCH *SUNLIGHT* FOR?

BOO HOO. WE'RE NEARLY THERE.

REPARACIÓN VCR.

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT?

YEAH. LETS US BLEND IN WITH EVERY-ONE ELSE DOING IT.

LUCY, I'M *HOME!*

THIS IS HOW WE'RE GONNA GET ROBO BACK?

PRIVATE

NO. THIS IS THE FRONT ROOM.

THIS IS HOW WE GET ROBO BACK.

BERNIE!

DIDN'T HAVE *TOO* MUCH TROUBLE FINDING HIM?

NOT TOO MUCH, NO.

BEEN TOO LONG, MAN.

YEAH, IT HAS.

GOT US BACK ONLINE, BOSS.

IT'S, UH, *FOLEY*, RIGHT?

LONG WAY FROM CENTRALIA.

SHE SHOWED UP NOT LONG AFTER YOU LEFT. ON THE RUN FROM MAJESTIC.

SHE DOES THE GRUNT WORK.

AH. AN *INTERN.*

YOU TELL HIM WHAT'S UP?

I TOLD HIM WE HAD A PLAN, BUT NOT WHAT IT WAS.

SIT DOWN AND GET READY FOR SOME *WEIRD* MATH.

OUR *WHOLE* SET UP? IT'S *ALL* ABOUT FIGURING OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO ROBO IN VENEZUELA.

HE WAS VAPORIZED IN AN EXPLOSION.

THAT'S WHAT WE *SAW.* BUT IS THAT WHAT *HAPPENED?*

THE *OFFICIAL* STORY IS THAT THE EXPLOSION WAS A METEOR. LIKE IN RUSSIA?

MAJESTIC'S *STILL* USING THAT LINE TO PUSH FOR A SPACE DEFENSE FORCE.

EVERYONE BOUGHT IT. BUT *WE* KNOW IT WAS FROM DR. DINOSAUR'S "TIME BOMB."

SO WHAT ABOUT THE RADIATION? THERE WERE *NUKES.*

NO X-RAYS. *NO* GAMMAS *OR* NEUTRONS. THERE WAS NOTHING NUCLEAR ABOUT THAT EVENT.

WE SPENT *MONTHS* TRACKING DOWN ORBITAL RECON OF THE SITE AND *THEN* BORROWING TIME ON SUPERCOMPUTERS TO CRUNCH IT.

YOU'RE WELCOME, BY THE WAY.

NOW, ALL OF THIS PAINTS AN *IMPOSSIBLE* PICTURE.

UNLESS YOU INCLUDE THE FIFTH CARDINAL DIRECTION. ZORTH.

BECAUSE *THEN* THE EVIDENCE IS CONSISTENT WITH THE PRESENT INTERSECTING THE PAST THROUGH AN ENORMOUS ZORTH-LIKE DISTORTION.

YOU'RE SAYING SOMETHING DR. DINOSAUR BUILT ACTUALLY ***WORKED?***

NO. WE'RE SAYING IT DIDN'T DO WHAT HE ***THOUGHT*** IT WOULD, BUT IT ALSO DIDN'T DO WHAT ***WE*** THOUGHT IT WOULD.

THE GRAVIMETRIC DATA FITS OUR MODEL OF SPACETIME SNAPPING BACK AFTER A SPIKE OF ZORTH TORSION CURVING ***BACKWARDS*** THROUGH TIME.

YOU'RE TELLING ME ROBO IS TRAPPED IN THE ***PAST?***

NO. OR, WELL, HE ***WAS.*** BUT NOW HE'S DEAD. OR DORMANT.

WHICH, UH, WORKS FOR US? BECAUSE ROBO WOULD KNOW HE HAD, LIKE, TWENTY YEARS ***MAX*** BEFORE HE'D RUN OUT OF POWER.

AND, OUR THINKING IS, HE'S A ***SCIENTIST.*** HE'D THINK AHEAD. HE'D MAKE ARRANGEMENTS SO HIS ***CORPSE*** WOULDN'T SCREW UP CAUSALITY.

SO ALL ***WE*** NEED TO DO IS FIGURE OUT WHERE HE'D PUT HIMSELF SO HE COULD BE FOUND ON PURPOSE, BUT ***NOT*** BY ACCIDENT.

UP FRONT, I DON'T THINK ***ANY*** OF THIS IS POSSIBLE.

BUT.

IT'D HAVE TO BE SOMEWHERE HE KNEW WOULDN'T BE TOUCHED FOR AT LEAST HIS LIFETIME. PROBABLY PROPERTY HE OWNED.

COULDN'T BE THE OLD HOUSTON STREET LAB. TOO RISKY.

COLORADO SPRINGS. HOLY HELL, ***COLORADO SPRINGS!***

BIG SCIENCE INC., TOKYO
THREE DAYS LATER

I WANT *THEIR* FILES ON *OUR* SERVERS AND I WANT IT DONE *DAYS AGO.*

THEY SAW US COMING, SIR. EVERY SYSTEM'S ON EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN. WE THINK THEY CUT THE *PHYSICAL* POWER LINES.

THEN FIND WHERE THEY KEEP THE *HARD COPIES.*

GENERAL BROOKS! WE GOT THE ARMORY, SIR.

THE, UH, *BIG* ARMORY.

ALL *FIVE* TITAN SERIES MOBILE PLATFORMS PLUS FULL WEAPON LOADOUT FOR EACH.

THANK GOD FOR THAT.

JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO TURN THEM ON.

YET.

HARD COPIES. *FIND* THEM.

MEET ME IN THE ARMORY WITH DIRECTOR HOKUTO.

YESSIR.

WE MIGHT JUST SAVE THIS ROCK AFTER ALL.

GET HOKUTO OUT OF LOCK UP.

THE BIG ARMORY
ONE HOUR LATER

THEY'RE NO GOOD TO US WITHOUT ACTIVATION CODES.

IS *THAT* WHAT YOU WANT WITH ME?

IT *IS*, DIRECTOR HOKUTO. YOUR COOPERATION WOULD BE A WELCOME CHANGE.

I HAVE NO DOUBT.

IF YOU DON'T ASSIST US, WE *WILL* DISASSEMBLE ONE TITAN TO LEARN HOW TO OPERATE THE REST.

THAT'S WASTING *HUNDREDS* OF MAN-HOURS, AND SIGNIFICANTLY HAMPERING DEFENSE EFFORTS AGAINST WHAT'S NEXT.

BUT WE'LL DO IT IF YOU DON'T GIVE US A CHOICE.

AND *EVERY* DEATH WE'RE UNABLE TO PREVENT WILL BE ON *YOUR* HEAD.

BECAUSE *YOU* HAD THIS ONE CHANCE TO HELP US ELIMINATE THE *BIOMEGA* THREAT BEFORE IT REACHES CRITICALITY.

WE CAN'T PROVE IT WILL.

TESLADYNE

THAT *ISN'T* HOW THE WORLD WORKS ANYMORE, DIRECTOR.

YOUR PEOPLE HAD *FORTY YEARS* TO CLEAN UP THIS MESS. IT'S *OUR* TURN.

AND *WE* WON'T WAIT FOR A BIOMEGA OUTBREAK TO TAKE OUT A CONTINENT BEFORE WE ACT.

COLORADO SPRINGS
ONE WEEK LATER

BINGO.

601
NORTH FOOTE AVENUE
COLORADO

OKAY. THERE SHOULD BE SOME KINDA UTILITY ACCESS DOOR. PROBABLY HIDDEN BEHIND THE TREELINE.

WHAT IF WE'RE WRONG AND THERE'S NOTHING HERE?

THEN WE ALL BLAME YOU BECAUSE IT WAS YOUR IDEA.

OKAY, BUT AFTER THAT?

THEN WE GO BACK TO THE DATA. TRY TO FIND A CLUE IN THERE.

NARROW DOWN THE TIME AND PLACE ROBO WENT BACK TO.

SO BACK INTO HIDING THEN?

IT'S NOT LIKE WE HAVE A ***CHOICE***. WE'D BE FUGITIVES IF WE WEREN'T ALREADY DECLARED DEAD.

THERE'S NO WAY BACK, IS THERE. TO A ***NORMAL*** *LIFE, I MEAN.*

SURE THERE IS, BERNIE.

HEMI

ALL WE GOTTA DO IS SHUT DOWN THE SECRET POLICE BACKED BY EVERY TERRIFYING GOVERNMENT SHADOW AGENCY EVER.

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

P.S., WE FOUND IT.

OKAY. CLOSEST THING TO AN INVENTORY IS WHAT I PULLED FROM THE DATABASE. AND THAT'S JUST A LIST OF SERIAL NUMBERS.

WHERE'D YOU GET PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES?

MADE IT.

IT'LL *WORK?*

SEE, YOU DON'T WORRY IF EXPLOSIVES *WORK*. YOU WORRY IF THEY'LL WORK *TOO MUCH*.

EACH SERIAL NUMBER IS A LETTER FOLLOWED BY SEVEN DIGITS.

EXCEPT FOR ITEM ZERO-ONE-ONE-THREE-FOUR. THAT'S "HELLO" SPELLED BACKWARDS.

SERIOUSLY?

FLICK

THE ZORTH *AND* TIME TRAVEL STUFF ARE *WAY* EASIER TO BELIEVE THAN ROBO STOOPING TO *TEXT SPEAK*.

YEAH, BUT IT *IS* SOMETHING EVERYONE CAN IGNORE *EXCEPT* FOR THE PERSON LOOKING FOR WHAT *SHOULDN'T* BE THERE.

AND IN ROBO'S DEFENSE, HE *IS* LIKE THE OLDEST OLD EVER, RIGHT? HE WOULDN'T KNOW *LEET* ISN'T A THING ANYMORE.

BOOP

FFFIIIZARK

WE'RE IN.

SIR. I HAVE SOMETHING.

PUT IT UP.

BUT THEIR *ENTIRE* OPERATION IS DEDICATED TO MONITORING BIOMEGA. THEY'VE KNOWN LONGER THAN ANYONE ELSE.

SO THEY PUT THE ENTIRE WORLD IN DANGER EITHER THROUGH NEGLIGENCE OR SILENCE.

THIS IS A TIME LAPSE OF WORLDWIDE BIOMEGA SIGNATURES OVER THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS.

HOW LONG HAVE THEY HAD THESE FIGURES?

COULDN'T SAY.

HOKUTO'S A *LIFER.* HAND PICKED BY YUMENO HIMSELF TO TAKE OVER THE DIRECTORSHIP.

IT WASN'T NEGLIGENCE.

OR THAT GOING PUBLIC WOULD PROMPT, WELL, EXACTLY WHAT WE JUST *DID* TO THEM.

HUBRIS? THEY KNOW MORE ABOUT BIOMEGA THAN ANYONE. HELL, ONE OF THEIR GUYS *INVENTED* IT. MAYBE THEY THOUGHT THEY COULD FIGHT IT.

DOESN'T MATTER. IT'S *TWICE* WHAT WE DETECTED WITH TESLADYNE'S OLD ARRAY.

AND *THOSE* NUMBERS WERE DIRE ENOUGH TO START THIS OPERATION.

THIS NEW DATA CUTS OUR TIMELINE IN *HALF.*

WE'LL BE LUCKY TO HAVE A *SINGLE* TITAN PILOT READY BY THEN.

HMM.

NO. WE ALREADY HAVE FIVE.

FIVE?

YOU DON'T MEAN SCIENCE TEAM SUPER FIVE?

IT'LL TAKE US ***WEEKS*** TO DEVELOP A TRAINING PROGRAM FROM SCRATCH.

AND ***THAT'S*** JUST TO GET THEM WHAT THEY NEED TO KNOW TO SIT IN THE SEAT LONG ENOUGH TO SHOW THEM WHERE THE ***ON SWITCH*** IS.

WE DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF TIME.

IS IT ***WISE*** TO TOSS THEM THE KEYS TO THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS ORDNANCE DELIVERY VECTORS?

WE PUT THEM IN JAIL AND THEY HATE US.

HOKUTO CRACKED AS SOON AS OUR AIMS WERE CLEAR. THEY ***WANT*** THE THREAT OF BIOMEGA ELIMINATED. WE CAN TRUST THEM.

WE NEED ONLY MAKE THE CASE THAT IT CAN'T BE DONE WITHOUT OUR RESOURCES BACKING UP ***THEIR*** TECH.

SIR, THERE'S A PRIORITY ONE BREACH AT THE COLORADO FACILITY.

WHAT, AT SCHRIEVER?

NO, ***OFF*** BASE. PROBABLY DEPARTMENT ZERO POKING AROUND AGAIN.

MOBILIZE THE LOCAL RESPONSE TEAM.

HOW MANY BASEMENTS *ARE* THERE?

HOPEFULLY JUST THAT ONE. BUT, UH, WE DON'T KNOW.

THIS COULD TAKE ALL NIGHT.

YOU GOT SOMEWHERE TO BE?

SOMEWHERE I'D *LIKE* TO BE, YEAH.

IT BETTER NOT BE THAT BAR IN MEXICO.

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE *THAT* ONE, NO.

I'M PICKING UP SOME CHATTER. *MILITARY.*

MY GUESS IT'S FROM SCHRIEVER AFB. WE'VE GOT *MINUTES.* AND NOT MANY.

VRUM

GUYS? WE GOTTA WRAP THIS UP.

TALK TO ME, KID.

YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.

WHAT? WE JUST *GOT* HERE.

VRUMRUM

JACKPOT.

UH. SHOULDN'T IT BE BIGGER?

I'UNNO.

BUT IT *IS* BOX 01134, JUST LIKE FOLEY SAID.

01134

OKAY, BUT WHY ISN'T IT *BIGGER?*

WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER--WE GOT INCOMING.

SKREEE

WHAT? WHO? MAJESTIC?

HAS TO BE.

IT MAY BE A FORGOTTEN VAULT, BUT IT'S STILL WIRED INTO THE TESLADYNE NETWORK.

UH, APPARENTLY.

C'MONNN!

DO *YOU* THINK IT'S THE RIGHT BOX?

DUNNO.

BUT WE GOTTA BRING *SOMETHING* BACK, OR WHAT WAS THE POINT?

MAYBE THERE'S INSTRUCTIONS INSIDE.
YEAH.
WHAT, LIKE IT'S A SCAVENGER HUNT?
KINDA *HEAVY* FOR INSTRUCTIONS, THOUGH.
YOU'RE TELLIN' ME.
MOVING TO RENDEZVOUS.
THERE'S A *LOT* OF BADNESS COMING OUR WAY. HOW'S *PLAN B* DOIN' BACK THERE, FOLEY?
VRRT
PLAN B IS AIRBORNE.
AND, *WOW,* PICKING UP A DRONE ALREADY!
POM
POM
POM
POM
10,000FT ABOVE COLORADO SPRINGS

WE'RE ALMOST AT THE PICK UP.

AND THEY ALREADY GOT YOU.

UH. WILL WE LIVE?

YOU'RE GOOD. JUST KEEP MOVING.

OKAY, GUYS. I'M GONNA BUZZ YOU IN THREE.

DON'T SWAT AT 'EM.

WHAT DO YOU--

--AH!

bzzzzzz

THEY'LL MIMIC YOUR **IF** SIGNATURES BROADCAST THROUGH AN INTERFERENCE PATTERN.

IT WON'T FOOL A **HUMAN** OPERATOR, BUT IT'LL TRICK EVERY DETECTION ALGORITHM ON THE MARKET.

AND IF IT WORKED, YOU GUYS GOT A COUPLE MINUTES BEFORE THEY FIGURE OUT THEIR DRONE'S CHASING DECOYS ***INSTEAD*** OF YOU TWO.

WHAT IF IT **DIDN'T** WORK?

OH. THEN WE'RE ALL DEAD.

I ***HATE*** HOW THE NEW KID ALWAYS SUGARCOATS THINGS.

WE'RE AT THE RENDEZVOUS!

ALMOST.

UH, GUYS? THEIR DRONE'S CHECKING IN WITH GROUND SUPPORT.

AND THEY ARE *CLOSE.*

PULL OVER!

SKREEE

WE WILL OPEN FIRE IN TEN SECONDS.

WE HAVE TO STOP.

I KNOW, FOLEY.

IT'LL LOOK *SUPER* SUSPICIOUS IF WE DON'T STOP.

I *KNOW,* FOLEY.

BERNARD, LANG. CHANGE OF PLANS.

NOTHING BIG, I HOPE? HERCULES HERE'S ABOUT TO PASS OUT.

=WHEEEZE=

SHOULDN'T WE BE LEADING MAJESTIC *AWAY* FROM DR. LANG AND DR. FISCHER?

WE'RE ALREADY COMPRO-MISED. DOING THIS CAN'T MAKE IT ANY *WORSE.*

GUYS? I NEED YOU TO GET IN AS SOON AS WE STOP.

VIK, WHAT'RE YOU--HANG ON. IS THAT *YOU?*

C'MON!

SKREEE

HRG!

C'MON, C'MON!

WE'RE IN!

CHNG

HANDS UP! EXIT THE VEHICLE. NOW!

KID.

WHEN I GET OUT, COUNT TO *FIVE* AND KILL THE DECOYS.

GET ON THE GROUND, GET ON THE GROUND NOW!

WHOA, HEY, JUST DELIVERING PIZZAS, MAN!

HANG ON. DRONE'S STILL ON THE FIRST TARGETS.

AND THEY'RE COMING AROUND?

THIS ISN'T OUR GUY.

TK

BANG BANG BANG

THEY *SHOOTIN'* AT US?

HOLD YOUR FIRE! TARGETS GONE *DARK!*

SHOCKWAVE INBOUND TO LAST KNOWN POSITION!

SOMEBODY GET THE DAMN CIVVIE *OUTTA HERE!*

FOOMP

MOVE!

I'M GONE, MAN, I'M *GOING.*

POOM

SWEEP THE AREA!

I WANT CAPTIVES, *NOT* CORPSES!

OKAY, I *THINK* THAT WORKED.

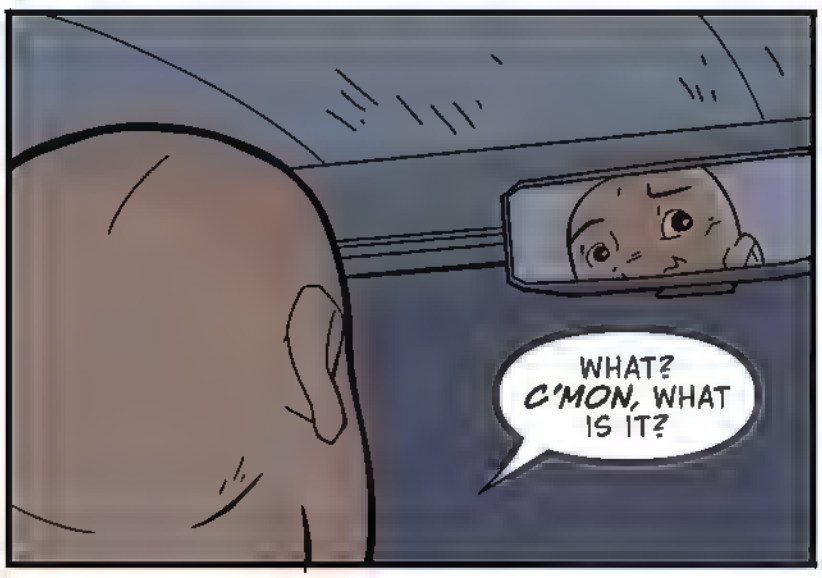
WESTBOUND ON WILLAMETTE AVE. AS FAST AS THIS VAN WILL GO

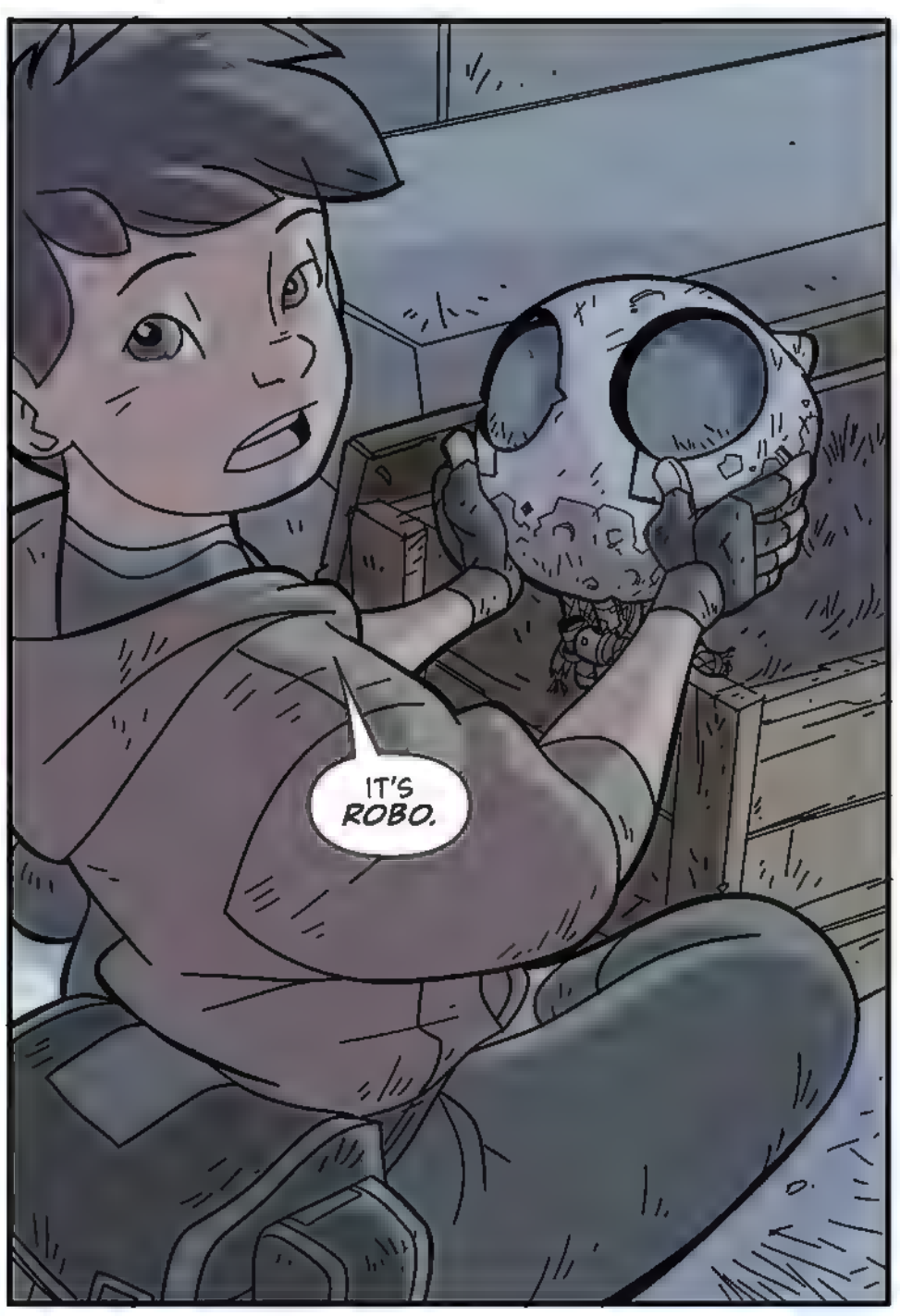
YEAH. WE'RE CLEAR. NO PINGS.

WE'LL MAKE THE HIGHWAY BEFORE THEY FIND WHAT'S LEFT OF THE DECOYS.

I'M GONNA BE *CRAZY* MAD IF THIS WAS FOR NOTHING.

GRANK


WHAT? C'MON, WHAT IS IT?


IT'S ROBO.

ART BY SCOTT WEGENER
COLORS BY ANTHONY CLARK

SATURDAY, 11:02 AM
TESLADYNE ISLAND
TASK FORCE ULTRA HQ

BROOKS' TEAM GOT THE BIOMEGA DATA ***STRAIGHT*** FROM BSI'S NETWORK.

FINALLY.

IT'S NOT GOOD.

WE GOT A SCREEN IN HERE? PATCH IT THROUGH.

WE DETECTED ***FIVE*** POINTS OF BIOMEGA CRITICALITY.

THE BSI DATA SHOWS ***SEVEN.***

AND THEY'RE INTENSIFYING AT ***TWICE*** THE RATE ESTIMATED? THAT DOESN'T LEAVE US MUCH TIME.

THREE, ***FOUR*** MONTHS AT MOST.

BROOKS IS WORKING WITH ***STSS*** TO BRING OUR PEOPLE UP TO SPEED ON THE TITANS.

BUT THESE NEW CRITICALITY POINTS MEAN THERE'S AN EVEN ***GREATER*** NEED FOR THE BROUGHTON REACTORS ***AND*** LESS TIME TO DEVELOP THEM.

THEN WE'D BETTER VISIT THE PROJECT OSIRIS TEAM.

MILL CREEK MOBILE ESTATES, COLORADO SPRINGS

FOR THE RECORD, I AM VOICING MY CONCERN.

AGAIN.

ROBO'S BRAIN IS THE MOST SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY ON *EARTH* AND THE LAST THING IT NEEDS IS *JUMPER CABLES.*

YEAH. HOW DANGEROUS *IS* THIS?

FOR ROBO? VERY. FOR US? TOTALLY SAFE.

JUST DON'T TOUCH *ANYTHING.*

ALL WE CAN DO IS TRY *NOT* TO FRY HIS HARDWARE. FROM THERE IT'S OUT OF OUR HANDS.

HE WAKES UP OR HE WAS *ALREADY* GONE.

GOOD LUCK, ROBO.

IS IT WORKING?

WHY ARE YOU WHISPERING?

YOU ARE TOO.

HE *STARTED* IT.

I *THINK* HE'S WAKING UP.

STEPPING UP VOLTAGE. *SLOWLY.*

KREK!

MY *EVERYTHING* HURTS.

VHS

EXOTIC PHYSICS LAB
PROJECT OSIRIS

DON'T EVEN START. IT CAN'T BE DONE.

IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE UNDER THE *ORIGINAL* TIMELINE.

THIS? IF I HAD *TWICE* THE STAFF AND BROUGHTON *HIMSELF*, THEN *MAYBE* WE COULD DO IT.

THE TITANS WERE *NEVER* INTENDED FOR GLOBAL DEPLOYMENT.

BUT NOW THEY *NEED* TO BE.

THAT DOESN'T CHANGE WHY WE *CAN'T*.

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE?

A MIRACLE? BROUGHTON'S DEAD.

PRESUMED DEAD.

WHAT IF WE *TRIPLED* YOUR STAFF?

TRIPLE? THEN IT'S A *LITTLE* LESS IMPOSSIBLE. *IF* THEY'RE THE BEST. AND *IF* WE TAKE OVER THE METAMATERIALS LAB.

DONE. WE CAN FIND THE BUDGET FOR IT *AFTER* WE SAVE ALL LIFE ON EARTH.

WHICH WE *CAN'T* DO WITHOUT A BROUGHTON REACTOR SMALL ENOUGH TO INSTALL IN THE TITANS. *UNDERSTAND?*

EVERYONE WE'RE ADDING TO THIS TEAM IS AT THE TOP OF THEIR FIELD.

IF WE DON'T HAVE THE BEST, FIND OUT WHERE THEY ARE AND SEND A TEAM TO *ACQUIRE* THEM.

MEANWHILE...

RAIL CANNON ARTILLERY. ADAPTIVE COMPUTATIONAL FABRICS. ULTRA HIGH FREQUENCY AMMUNITION. THE *TITAN* MOBILE PLATFORM.

HOKUTO, YOUR ORGANIZATION'S SITTING ON THE LARGEST STOCKPILE OF UNREALIZED MILITARY TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WORLD.

YOU'RE MILITARY. EVERYTHING IS A WEAPON TO YOU.

THOSE *AREN'T* WEAPONS?

THEY ARE *HIGHLY* EXPERIMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES UNSUITED FOR FIELD USE.

SCIENCE TEAM SUPER FIVE MAKES USE OF THEM.

YES, AS THE *LAST RESORT* AGAINST BIOMEGA.

I KNOW YOU'D RATHER WE WEREN'T HERE, BUT WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?

YOU HID DATA ON RISING BIOMEGA LEVELS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. *NOW* IT'S A CRISIS AND ALL LIFE ON EARTH IS AT RISK.

IT WASN'T *HIDDEN.* THERE WAS NO POINT IN *SHARING* IT.

WE DON'T HAVE THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO *COPE* WITH MULTIPLE BIOMEGA, AND NO ONE ELSE HAS THE TOOLS TO *FIGHT* THEM.

BIOMEGA IS AN EVOLUTIONARY SYSTEM DISCONNECTED FROM TIME AND GEOGRAPHY. INDIVIDUAL BIOMEGA ARE *CONNECTED* TO ONE ANOTHER.

WE HOPED TO PINPOINT A KIND OF *NEXUS.* DESTROYING IT WOULD CRIPPLE THE REST. MAKE THEM VULNERABLE TO CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.

AND? DID YOU FIND IT?

NO. NOTHING CONCLUSIVE.

THEN WE HAVE SEVEN BIOMEGA TO CONTEND WITH.

YOUR HARDWARE. *OUR* INFRASTRUCTURE. WE *MAY* JUST PULL THIS OFF.

THE SECRET MILITARY INDUSTRIAL CORPS FOUNDED TO WEAPONIZE MY FATHER'S WORK AGAINST HIS WISHES NOW **RUNS** MY COMPANY.

AND THEY TURNED IT INTO A PARAMILITARY FORCE TO PLUNDER LABORATORIES AROUND THE WORLD IN THE NAME OF NATIONAL SECURITY.

THAT'S ABOUT IT, YEAH.

WHO ELSE ESCAPED?

I WAS IN BRAZIL WHEN EVERYTHING HAPPENED. DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING WAS WRONG UNTIL I LOGGED IN FOR MY WEEKLY UPDATE.

ALL WE KNOW IS WHAT I PULLED FROM THE DATABASE DURING THAT SESSION.

ABOUT A DOZEN MISSING.

INCLUDING US.

EVERYONE MISSING IS PRESUMED DEAD.

ALSO INCLUDING US. SO, NO TELLING ABOUT THE OTHERS.

JENKINS? THEY DON'T HAVE **HIM**, DO THEY?

DEAD. AN EXPLOSION. THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT.

NO **BODY**? HE'S ALIVE.

NOT THAT IT MATTERS. ANYONE WHO GOT OUT MUST BE LYING SO LOW THEY MAY AS WELL **BE** DEAD.

SO TO SPEAK.

WHAT **DO** WE HAVE? WHAT CAN WE PUT OUR HANDS ON?

UH. YOU'RE *LOOKING* AT IT.

LESS THAN THAT, EVEN. WE'RE ONLY *RENTING* THE TRAILER.

NO *WAY* WE'RE GETTING THAT SECURITY DEPOSIT BACK.

I WAS HOPING FOR *GUNS* AT LEAST.

ROBO, YOU'VE BEEN SECRET HISTORY-ING FOR A *CENTURY!* YOU'VE GOT SECRET CACHES. RIGHT? JUST *INFESTED* WITH 'EM!

I HAD *ONE.*

YOU FOUND MY *HEAD* IN IT. AND YOU SAID MAJESTIC WAS THERE IN *MINUTES.*

NEXT.

OKAY. YOU'VE GOT *CONNECTIONS* LIKE CRAZY, RIGHT? WE CAN CALL IN SOME FAVORS!

MAJESTIC OPERATES AS "TASK FORCE ULTRA" THROUGH THE ***NSA.*** ANYONE CONNECTED TO ROBO IS UNDER ***TURBO*** SURVEILLANCE.

THE BLACK MARKET.

WHAT BLACK MARKET?

THE BLACK MARKET? YOU MEAN, LIKE, DEPARTMENT ZERO?

ARE ***WE*** REBUILDING ROBO IN THIS PLAN?

DUH.

THE ***FOUR*** OF US?

WITH ***ZERO*** ROBOTICISTS ***OR*** NUCLEAR PHYSICISTS.

WHICH DOESN'T MATTER SINCE WE'LL NEVER GET NEAR THE ***PLUTONIUM*** WE'D NEED.

NOT THAT ***THAT*** MATTERS EITHER, BECAUSE WE'LL NEVER BUILD A ***REACTOR*** SMALL ENOUGH TO FIT IN HIS ***CHEST.***

I'M NOT SAYING WE'LL MAKE HIM LIKE HE ***WAS.*** HE JUST NEEDS ***SOMETHING*** BETTER THAN WHAT HE'S GOT ***NOW.***

WE'RE NOT SERIOUSLY DOING THIS? DEPARTMENT ZERO?

I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE WE'LL FIND WHAT WE NEED AT RADIO SHACK.

AND, LANG'S RIGHT, ROBO'S NO GOOD TO US LIKE ***THIS.***

THIS MIGHT BE A DUMB QUESTION, BUT WHAT'S A DEPARTMENT ZERO?

*THEY WERE **RUSSIA'S** TESLADYNE.*

IT SPLINTERED WHEN THE SOVIET UNION DISSOLVED. NOW THERE'S DOZENS OF CELLS.

*ONE OF **THOSE** RUNS THE INTERNATIONAL SUPER-SCIENCE BLACK MARKET.*

PROTOTYPES, DESIGNS, WEAPONS, GOONS. THEY GOT IT ALL.

AND WITH ***ULTRA*** STORMING ***LEGIT*** LABS, THEY'RE OUR SAFEST BET.

UH, WE'RE ***NERDS.*** WE AREN'T BLACK MARKET PEOPLE. WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE IT IS!

LET'S JUST LOOK IT UP.

I DON'T THINK THEY HAVE A ***WEBSITE,*** KID.

OF COURSE THEY DO! EXCEPT IT'D BE ON THE ***UNDERNET.***

THE PUBLIC INTERNET IS LIKE THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN.

UNDER THAT IS THE DEEP WEB. OR DARKNET.

I LIKE UNDERNET BUT NO ONE USES THAT.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE ***MUSHROOMS*** KID.

CUSTOM GROWN GRAPHENE-FUNGAL MESHES WILL BE ***THE*** POST-HUMAN INDUSTRY OF THE FUTURE.

OUR BODIES ALREADY KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH FUNGUS. CHANGE A FEW GENES AND THE FUNGUS ***IS*** THE BODY.

FUNGUS, UNDERNET. IT'S ALL ABOUT EXPLOITING SYSTEMS IN NOVEL WAYS.

I ASK FOR GUNS AND WHAT I GET IS FUNGUS-HUMAN HYBRIDS?

LATER...

OKAY. DEPARTMENT ZERO IS RUN OUT OF A STOLEN CONTAINER SHIP CALLED *THE VASILISA.*

IT NEVER DOCKS AND IT NEVER LEAVES THE WATERS OF, UH, THE *DISPUTED ZONE.*

IT'S A STRETCH OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA THAT'S CLAIMED BY PRETTY MUCH EVERY COUNTRY *IN* THE SOUTH CHINA SEA.

GZNORK!

BOOK PASSAGE ON A FREIGHTER TO HONG KONG. WE'LL IMPROVISE OUR WAY FROM THERE.

THAT'S IT? JUST BOOK PASSAGE?

FOR FOUR OFFICIALLY DEAD INTERNATIONAL *FUGITIVES?*

AS LONG AS WE'RE NOT WAVING AROUND ASSAULT RIFLES, WE'LL GET THROUGH PORT SECURITY.

NEXT MORNING

WE SHOULD WORK UP SOME FAKE HISTORIES. Y'KNOW, CRIME JOBS, ALIASES. STUFF LIKE THAT.

SO WE CAN KEEP OUR STORIES STRAIGHT AND NOT GET, UH, *KILLED.*

GOOD THINKING. IT'LL TAKE A MONTH TO GET THERE, SO WE'VE GOT TIME.

OAKLAND, CA
23 HOURS AND 1,300-ISH MILES LATER...

PORT OAKLAND

HONG KONG HARBOR
26 DAYS AND 5,000-ISH MILES LATER...

カゲテル

DISPUTED ZONE

THE VASILISA

THE BLACK MARKET

HOW ARE WE DOING THIS?

TWO TEAMS. SPLIT THE SHOPPING LIST, MEET BACK UP AT NIGHTFALL. AND JUST, YOU KNOW, *BLEND.*

YOU CAN THANK ME LATER FOR THOSE FAKE CRIMINAL HISTORIES I WORKED UP FOR EVERYONE.

NEURO BOOSTS
ANTI-DRON
EMPORIU
ISCOUNT
24/7 WAFFLES
IMPLANTS SEPARATE
GUNS
ASSAULT RIFLES
RPGS
ROBOTICS

BERNIE, I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT THOSE BACKGROUNDS YOU MADE UP WORKED LIKE A CHARM.

A LITTLE RESEARCH GOES A *LONG* WAY.

BREACH IN THREE, TWO...

DOWN, DOWN!

KRAKT

CLEAR!

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

I'VE GOT THIS. CONTINUE THE ROUNDS.

SIR.

WHAT, DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?

PHIL!

BROUGHTON?! YOU'RE ALIVE!

WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?!

I GOT OUT DURING THE TESLADYNE RAID. LONG STORY SHORT, I'M THE CHIEF HEALTH PHYSICIST HERE.

OF... DEPARTMENT ZERO?

SCIENTISTS FROM ALL OVER END UP HERE SO THEY DON'T GET DISAPPEARED BY MAJESTIC. OR ULTRA. WHATEVER THEY ARE NOW.

CONSEQUENTLY, WE'RE RUNNING SOME OF THE MOST ADVANCED LABORATORIES IN THE WORLD BELOW DECKS.

AND THEY NEED SOMEONE TO MAKE SURE THEY DON'T BLOW UP. ME.

HI, UH. WHAT'S GOING ON?

THIS IS PHIL. HE'S THE KEY TO BRINGING ROBO BACK.

I'M THE WHAT NOW?

WAIT! WE WERE IN DISGUISE. HOW'D YOU KNOW IT WAS US?

I DIDN'T. BUT I KNEW SOMETHING WAS UP WITH THOSE NAMES.

CRASH OVERRIDE, CEREAL KILLER, PHANTOM PHREAK, ACID BURN.

THEY'RE FROM HACKERS. THE MOVIE?

DAMMIT, BERNARD!

I THOUGHT YOU GUYS KNEW!

WHY WOULD WE AGREE TO IT IF WE ***KNEW?!***

YEAH, I DIDN'T KNOW.

WHICH ONE DID YOU MAKE JOLIE? ***ME?*** THE KID? NOT ***VIK!***

WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT BRINGING ROBO ***BACK?***

BECAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE BUILDING A VERY CRAPPIER ONE.

SORT OF? IT'S A LITTLE COMPLICATED.

PHIL. HI. GLAD YOU'RE NOT DEAD EITHER.

OH, LOOK AT THAT. ARMS.

I THINK I NEED TO SIT DOWN.

PHIL'S IN CHARGE OF SAFETY HERE, ROBO.

IT'S COMPLICATED. BUT ROBO? UH. YOU'RE A HEAD.

NOW WITH ARMS!

HE'S A HEAD BECAUSE OF *TIME TRAVEL.*

TIME TRAVEL?

ALSO COMPLICATED.

BUT RIGHT NOW I NEED TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE A SPARE REACTOR LYING AROUND.

I'VE GOT A SECOND GEN MODEL BELOW DECKS. IT'S *HALF* THE SIZE OF WHAT WE HAD AT TESLADYNE BEFORE THE RAID.

THAT'S GREAT!

ALMOST. WHAT YOU NEED IS SOMETHING *MUCH* SMALLER WITH ABOUT *TRIPLE* THE OUTPUT.

COULD YOU BUILD THAT?

I'VE GOT A SHOPPING LIST READY IN CASE A *DOZEN* ENTIRELY THEORETICAL METAMATERIALS SUDDENLY BECOME *REAL.*

BUT YOU'RE SAYING IT COULD BE DONE.

SURE. BUT I'D WISH FOR A MILLION WISHES FIRST.

BOOM

ARE WE UNDER FIRE?

COULDN'T BE. I MEAN, CHINA TRACKS US *RELENTLESSLY.*

BUT THEY *KNOW* THERE'RE TOO MANY HAZARDOUS *THINGS* ON BOARD TO RISK AN *ATTACK.*

ANYWAY, *ANY* MILITARY ACTION WITHIN THE DISPUTED ZONE WOULD BE PERCEIVED AS AN ACT OF AGGRESSION AGAINST THE OTHER--

PHIL!

RIGHT. SO. MIGHT'VE HIT A REEF?

DIDN'T *SOUND* LIKE ONE THOUGH.

OKAY. TIME TO TALK TO THE CAPTAIN.

MAYBE SOMETHING HIT *US?*

HEY. TELL THE CAPTAIN I NEED--

HWAAAUGH!

--I NEED TO GO BACK INSIDE NOW.

IT'S A.

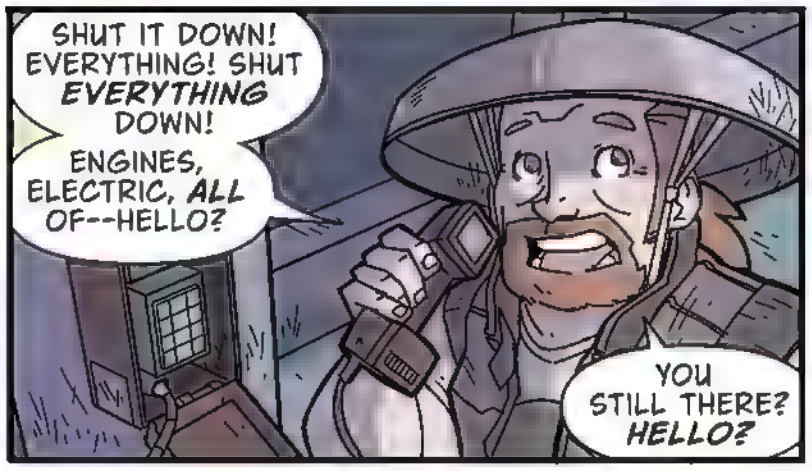
IT'S A *BIOMEGA?*

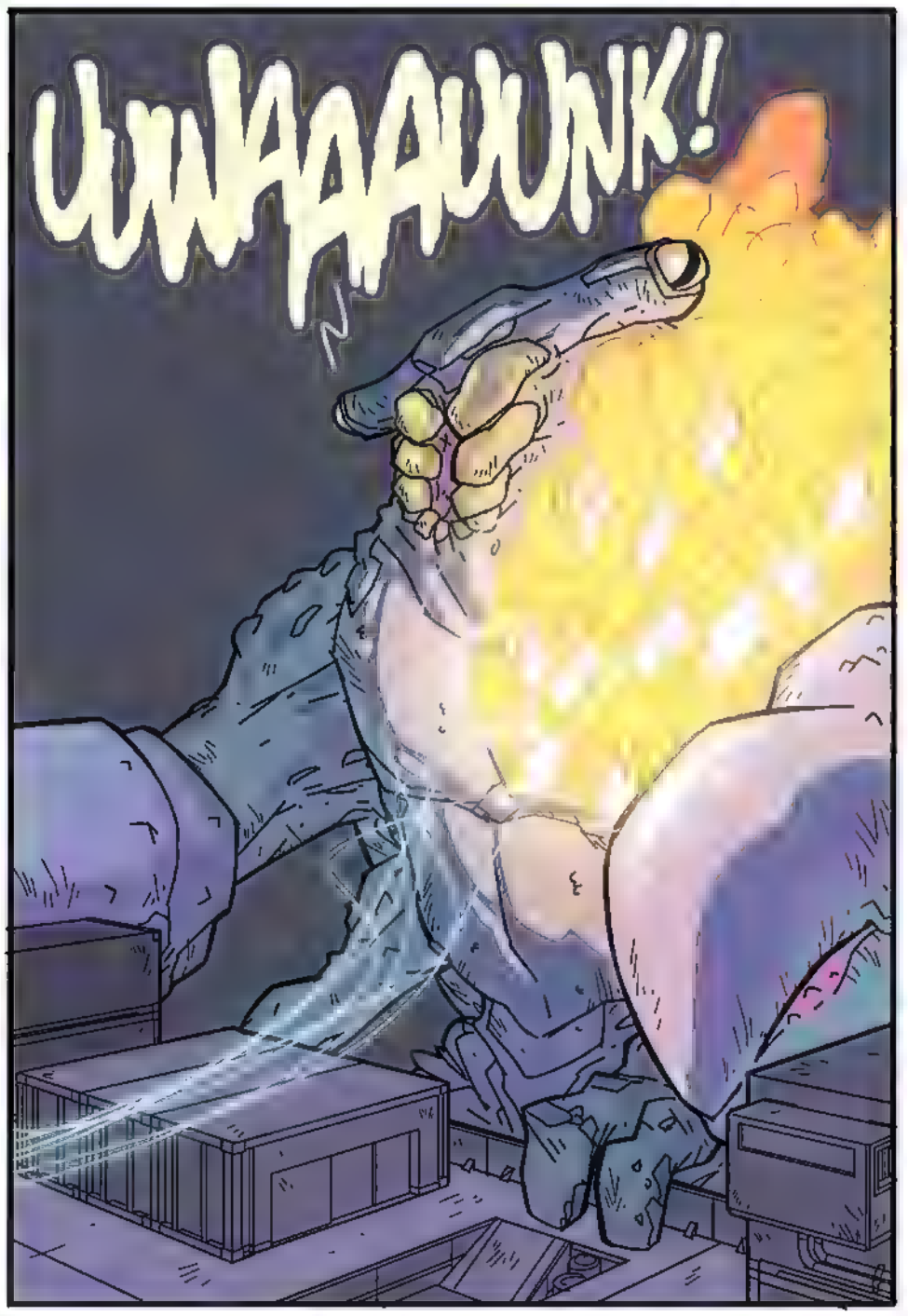
NO WAY!

OH *MAN,* I THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL DEAD!

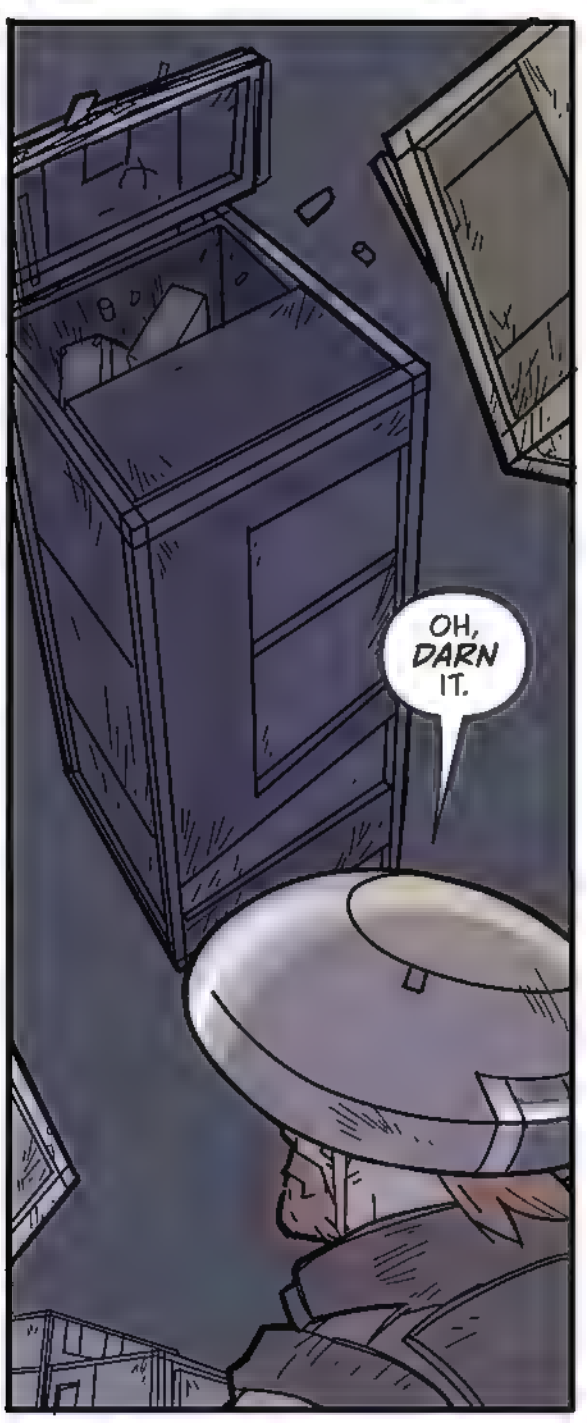
AS THE CHIEF SAFETY GUY, IT'S MY DUTY TO YELL AT PEOPLE SO WE CAN GET THROUGH THIS ALIVE.

I'M FINE BY THE WAY.


SHUT IT DOWN! EVERYTHING! SHUT *EVERYTHING* DOWN!
ENGINES, ELECTRIC, *ALL* OF--HELLO?
YOU STILL THERE? *HELLO?*


UNNAAUUNK!

FWAM


OH, *DARN* IT.

COULD I GET A SAMPLE?
NO, NO, NO.
JUST A LITTLE ONE?
DOWN!
KUNG WONG
NO SAMPLES.
YEAH. NO. RIGHT. YEAH.
GUYS?
WHERE'S BERNIE?
BERNIE
AAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHH!
OKAY. I QUIT.

KCHOOM

HWABAUUURHG!

BABOOM

KTHROOM

HULKF

NOPE! STOP THAT! UNSAFE!

THAT'S WHAT I WAS TRYING TO TELL THEM!

ROBO AND BERNARD WENT OVER!

WELL THAT WAS STUPID!

CAREFUL, CAREFUL!

I'M TRYING!

RUNNING

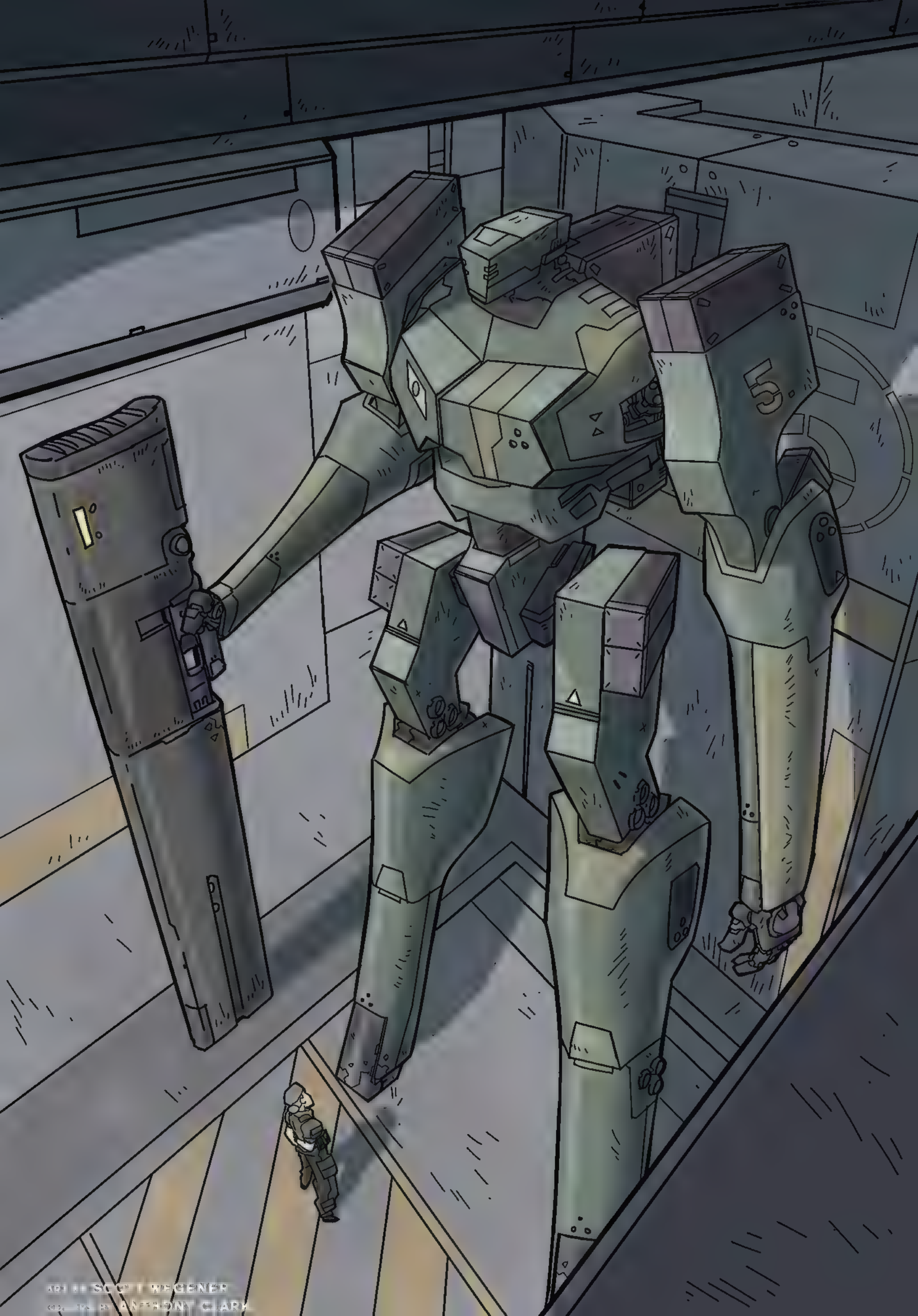
IT'S GONNA EAT US!

NO, WAIT.

LOOK. THE WATER'S RECEDING.

I THINK WE'RE SAVED.

I THINK WE'RE DOOMED.


SCOTT WEGENER
ANTHONY CLARK

TASK FORCE ULTRA HQ
THREE WEEKS AFTER THE NANSHA INCIDENT

THERE'S NO TIME TO SET UP A PRODUCTION LINE, SO EACH UNIT WILL BE AN ALPHA BUILD.

IT'S NOT ***IDEAL,*** BUT IT'S THE BEST WE CAN DO IN THE TIME WE HAVE.

YOUR NEW REACTOR WILL LET US DEPLOY THE TITAN SERIES ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

THEY'RE GOING TO GIVE YOU A MEDAL FOR THIS. THE WHOLE ***OSIRIS*** TEAM PROBABLY.

LET'S MAKE SURE CIVILIZATION ISN'T A SMOKING ***RUIN*** BEFORE WE START PLANNING THE CEREMONY.

NOW PACK UP, DR. SACHDEV. WE'RE SENDING YOUR TEAM TO ***TOKYO.***

WHAT, ***NOW?***

YOU HAVE ABOUT AN HOUR.

YOU'RE OVERSEEING INSTALLATION OF THE OSIRIS REACTORS, WITH ***PRIORITY ONE*** AUTHORIZATION.

EVERYTHING IS SECONDARY TO GETTING THOSE REACTORS ONLINE.

TECHNICALLY YOU'LL OUTRANK GENERAL BROOKS UNTIL IT'S DONE.

ONE HOUR AND TWELVE MINUTES LATER...
PROJECT OSIRIS SENIOR STAFF EN ROUTE

PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY BASE
UNDISCLOSED LOCATION
TARIM BASIN

GENERAL SHENG.

ATOMIC ROBO. DR. BROUGHTON. YOUR TEAM IS TO BE COMMENDED. *FULL* HUMANOID LOCOMOTION IN A MATTER OF WEEKS.

STILL GETTING THE HANG OF IT. HOPE YOU WON'T MIND IF WE WALK SLOWLY.

OF COURSE.

WHEN CAN WE LEAVE?

HAVE WE NOT BEEN HOSPITABLE?

OH, *VERY.*

ALMOST MAKES ME FORGET ABOUT HOW WE'RE BEING ILLEGALLY *DETAINED.*

YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE DR. BROUGHTON.

HE'S FULL OF *Q CLEARANCE* NUCLEAR SECRETS. *AND* HE KNOWS YOU KNOW THAT.

GUESS I'VE JUST GOT THIS SILLY THING ABOUT BEING HELD AGAINST MY WILL IN FOREIGN MILITARY BASES THAT DON'T APPEAR ON MAPS.

YOU'RE NOT PRISONERS. WE ONLY WISHED TO GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY WHILE WE VERIFIED YOUR STORY.

WHAT'S THE VERDICT?

WE WOULD LIKE TO OFFER YOUR TEAM A JOB.

THE BIOMEGA AT NANSHA IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

OUR DATA INDICATES MULTIPLE BIOMEGA. FIVE AT A MINIMUM. THERE ***WILL*** BE MORE.

beep

WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF A ***BIOLOGICAL SINGULARITY*** THAT WILL CONSUME OR TRANSFORM ALL ORGANIC MATTER ***INTO*** BIOMEGA.

IN YEARS PAST, THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE DEFENSE COMMUNITY COULD BE TRUSTED TO PUT POLITICS ASIDE IN A CRISIS.

TASK FORCE ULTRA MAKES THIS IMPOSSIBLE. NO ONE TRUSTS ANYONE.

WILL YOU HELP US DISMANTLE ULTRA AND SAVE THE WORLD?

MOST PERFECT SCIENCE DIVISION
AUTOMATIC SOLDIER PROJECT R&D FACILITY

100

LATER...

I DON'T LIKE IT.

ME NEITHER. BUT DO WE HAVE A CHOICE?

IF I'M READING THIS RIGHT, THEN THIS IS *THE* MOST ADVANCED ROBOTICS LAB ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

WE CAN GO FROM DESIGN TO PROTOTYPE IN *HOURS.*

PLUS THE BUDGET IS *"QUESTION MARK."* THAT'S *LITERALLY* WHAT IT SAYS.

YEAH, BECAUSE IT'S THE *HEART* OF THEIR DRONE INFANTRY PROGRAM. THEY WANT US TO SHOW THEM HOW TO BUILD AN *ARMY* OF ROBOS.

I'M NOT SURE.

THEY'RE ONLY MISSING AUTOMATIC INTELLIGENCE AND AN ATOMIC ENGINE.

THEY MUST KNOW WE CAN'T HELP THEM WITH THOSE.

SHENG DOESN'T TRUST ULTRA TO HANDLE WHAT'S COMING.

I THINK THIS IS JUST A CLASSIC ENEMY OF MY ENEMY THING.

*AND RIGHT NOW **EVERYONE'S** ENEMY IS BIOMEGA.*

SO HERE'S WHAT WE'RE DOING.

"I'LL WORK WITH PHIL AND FUNGUS ON MY NEW BODY BY DAY.

"BY NIGHT I'LL BRAINSTORM THE BIOMEGA STRATEGY WITH LANG, BERNARD, AND VIK.

"BONUS POINTS IF WE CAN TAKE OUT MAJESTIC.

OSIRIS

"THEY NOW CONTROL SOME OF THE MOST ADVANCED WEAPON SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD THROUGH BIG SCIENCE INC.

"AND, LET'S FACE IT, THEY WON'T JUST GIVE THEM **BACK** WHEN THE CRISIS IS OVER.

SIM #3

BIOMEGA CELLS AREN'T ***IMMORTAL*** BUT THEY DON'T STAY DEAD. NEW CELLS GROW OUT OF THE DEAD ONES.

WE'D HAVE TO USE ABOUT A ***THIRD*** OF THE GLOBAL NUCLEAR STOCKPILE TO ***GUARANTEE*** COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF EXISTING BIOMEGA MATTER.

WHICH IS ALSO ENOUGH TO TRIGGER NUCLEAR WINTER.

"RUN THE NUMBERS ON NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS **INSIDE** A BIOMEGA."

"HOW'S THAT GONNA WORK JUST GIVE THEM ATOMIC SUICIDE PILLS?"

"FIRST LET'S SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING TO IT. **THEN** WE'LL WORRY ABOUT DELIVERY."

FULL RANGE OF MOTION. NONE OF THE JITTERS FROM THAT FIRST GO.

YEAH, THIS ONE'S A LOCK.

LET'S HOLD OFF ON PRINTING ITS PARTNER UNTIL WE TEST A WRIST ON THIS ONE.

SOUNDS GOOD. I'LL PUT THE LATEST ARCHITECTURE INTO PRODUCTION.

ROBO. I HAVE THAT RESEARCH YOU WANTED TO LOOK OVER.

OKAY. YOUR HEAD IS NOW BROADCASTING ***EVERY*** COUNTERMEASURE I COULD IMAGINE.

GOOD. THAT MEANS IT'S WORKING.

FEELS WEIRD, SORT OF A BUZZING.

SO, I WORKED THROUGH THE DESIGN OF A REACTOR TO REPLACE YOUR "HEART."

THE GOOD NEWS IS I CAN GET IT DOWN TO ***ONLY*** SEVENTEEN PERCENT LARGER THAN THE ORIGINAL.

VRR VRR

WE'RE REDESIGNING MY GUTS FROM THE GROUND UP ANYWAY. WE'LL FIND THE ROOM.

IT'D ONLY BE ABOUT ***HALF*** AS EFFICIENT, SO YOU'LL GO THROUGH FUEL ***TWICE*** AS FAST. THAT'S JUST A LOGISTICS PROBLEM REALLY.

WORST CASE SCENARIO, WE LEASE A PORTION OF YOUR LIFETIME TO THE D.O.E.

OR ROSATOM.

ANYWAY. THE ***BAD NEWS.***

THE ***ONLY*** WAY I CAN MAKE THE REACTOR THAT SMALL IS TO MAKE ***EXTENSIVE*** USE OF HYPOTHETICAL SUBSTANCES.

YOU DON'T ***WANT*** TO KNOW HOW MANY THREE-DIMENSIONAL TOPOLOGICAL DIRAC SEMI-METALS I HAD TO ***INVENT*** TO KEEP IT STABLE.

AND THAT'S JUST ***ONE*** OF THE MIRACLES IN THERE.

*OKAY, BUT **HYPOTHETICAL** DOESN'T MEAN **IMPOSSIBLE.** RIGHT?*

AS PER YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, NOTHING IN THE DESIGN CONTRADICTS THE KNOWN LAWS OF PHYSICS. SO, ***TECHNICALLY,*** NO, NOT IMPOSSIBLE.

BUT IT'S FULL OF THINGS THAT DON'T ***EXIST*** AND NO ONE KNOWS HOW TO MAKE ***ANY OF THEM.***

I MEAN, ALL I CAN THINK OF IS TO WAIT FIVE OR TEN YEARS FOR VIRAL ENGINEERING TO MERGE WITH NANO-FABRICATION.

AND THEN FOR ***THAT*** TO MERGE WITH 3D PRINTING.

THIS WASN'T ABOUT FEASIBILITY. IT WAS A FACT FINDING EXERCISE.

WHAT IT ***IS,*** IS A DETAILED PROOF OF HOW AND WHY WE ***CAN'T*** BUILD IT.

JIKKATAK CHK

*BUT **NOW** WE KNOW WHAT WE NEED TO **GET** THERE.*

THIS WAS THE S-1 COMMITTEE TO OUR MANHATTAN PROJECT.

WELL, ***NEXT*** TIME YOU'RE STUCK IN THE 19TH CENTURY, DO ME A FAVOR AND ***ASK*** TESLA HOW YOUR DAMN ATOMIC HEART WORKED.

IT'LL SAVE ME A LOT OF HEADACHES THE NEXT TIME WE HAVE TO DO THIS.

AND WHILE WE'RE AT IT, I NEED YOU TO ***STOP DOING THINGS*** THAT MAKE ME WORRY ABOUT ***THE NEXT TIME*** WE HAVE TO DO THIS.

BIG SCIENCE INC., TOKYO

IT'S A MATCH FOR THE NANSHA SIGNATURE. SINGAPORE STRAIT.

CURRENTLY DORMANT BUT LEVELS ARE RISING. ***FAST.***

WE'VE GOT FIVE HOURS ***AT MOST*** BEFORE IT SURFACES.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO GET A TITAN THERE?

BREAKDOWN, TRANSPORT, ***AND*** REASSEMBLY? TWO DAYS.

PROJECTING NINETY PERCENT CASUALTIES IN THAT TIME, SIR. FOUR ***MILLION*** DEAD.

WE CAN GET A TITAN THERE IN THREE HOURS.

I'M LISTENING, HOKUTO...

TWO HOURS LATER...

TITAN-1, WE'RE EXPECTING AN 80 TO 90G SHOCK AT LAUNCH.

YOU'LL BE IN FREEFALL WHEN YOU COME TO.

ROGER THAT.

JAXA LINEAR CATAPULT TEST SITE
TSUKUBA SPACE CENTER

THE HIGH VELOCITY PACK ***SHOULD*** KEEP YOU FROM DISINTEGRATING ON THE WAY UP ***OR*** CRASHING ON THE WAY DOWN.

UH. "SHOULD?"

THIS IS THE TEST FLIGHT. ELEVEN MINUTES TOTAL TRANSIT TIME.

USS LASSEN IN MY SIGHTS.

SINGAPORE STRAIT 10 MINUTES LATER...

FIRING RETROS.

FWOOSH

CHUNG

KTCHING

ALL SYSTEMS GREEN. SYNCING WITH LOCAL TACNET.

BUT I THINK I FOUND THE BOGEY.

SYNC COMPLETE, TITAN-1. YOU ARE FREE TO ENGAGE.

TARGET LOCKED.

VRRUUNNNN

IT'S COMING AROUND, TITAN-1!

TNK

CLNK

VRUNNNN

HRONNNK!

LANDFALL!

THE LASSEN IS HIT! I REPEAT, THE LASSEN IS HIT!

KOOOM

GONNA BURN UP THE JUMP JETS ON THIS ONE.

CHOOM

FWIK

FBOOM

KABOOM

VRUNNNNN

SHENG GOT HIS PEOPLE TO SHARE THEIR INTEL SO WE'D KNOW WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST.

THIS IS SINGAPORE. ABOUT TWO HOURS AGO. HUNDREDS DEAD, THOUSANDS INJURED. ROUGHLY A **BILLION** DOLLARS IN DAMAGES.

THE BATTLE WAS OVER IN THREE MINUTES.

OKAY, SO, ***THAT'S*** A TITAN. WHAT'S ***LEFT*** OF ONE, ANYWAY.

TITANS PLUG INTO TOKYO'S ELECTRIC GRID FOR POWER. SO, ALREADY, I DON'T LIKE THIS.

ULTRA ***COULD'VE*** DEVELOPED A REACTOR BASED ON WHAT WE LEFT AT TESLADYNE.

IF SO, THEY CAN DEPLOY THEIR GIANT STOMPY BOTS ***ANYWHERE*** IN THE WORLD.

GREAT. DID THEY AT LEAST KILL THE BIOMEGA?

NANSHA CREATURE // DOWNTIME: 35-40 DAYS

IF IT HAS MASS, IT'S NOT DEAD. JUST DORMANT. WELCOME TO FIGHTING BIOMEGA.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC GAUSS-SCRAM RIFLE

WHAT ***IS*** A "GAUSS-SCRAM" RIFLE?

IT'S A COILGUN THAT PROPELS SUPERSONIC BULLETS EQUIPPED WITH ***SCRAM-JETS.***

THEY HIT AT OVER MACH 4 ***AND*** EXPLODE. I ***LOVE*** IT.

IT'S THE MOST POWERFUL KINETIC KILL WEAPON ON EARTH AND IT WASN'T ENOUGH TO KILL A BIOMEGA.

THEN WHAT CHANCE DO ***WE*** HAVE?

LATER...

THIS IS YOUR NEW POWER SOURCE? IS IT SAFE?

WELL, LIKE YOU SAID, GETTING A REACTOR SMALL ENOUGH TO FIT IN MY CHEST WAS A NO-GO.

SO, I STARTED THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX. AND THE CHEST CAVITY.

THE PHYSICS OF IT ARE BASED ON TESLA'S TELLURIC SUIT. TECHNICALLY IT'S SAFER THAN HAVING THE REACTOR IN ME ANYWAY.

I GET THAT, BUT POLITICALLY IT'S *FRAUGHT.*

IT STARTS AT INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT AND GOES TO WORLD WAR THREE FROM THERE.

YOU'LL DRAW WIRELESS POWER *DIRECTLY* FROM THE CHINESE NUCLEAR GRID. WITH A RANGE OF, UH, *ANYWHERE* ON EARTH?

I MEAN, IT'S GREAT, BUT IT'S TERRIBLE. YOU'RE HACKING ANOTHER NATION'S POWER SUPPLY. SPECIFICALLY THE ONE INVOLVING SCARY RADIATIONS.

THIS'LL MAKE THE HASHIMA HOOPLA LOOK LIKE AFTERNOON TEA.

IT'S A TEMPORARY MEASURE.

AND A *MASSIVE* BREACH OF THEIR NATIONAL SECURITY.

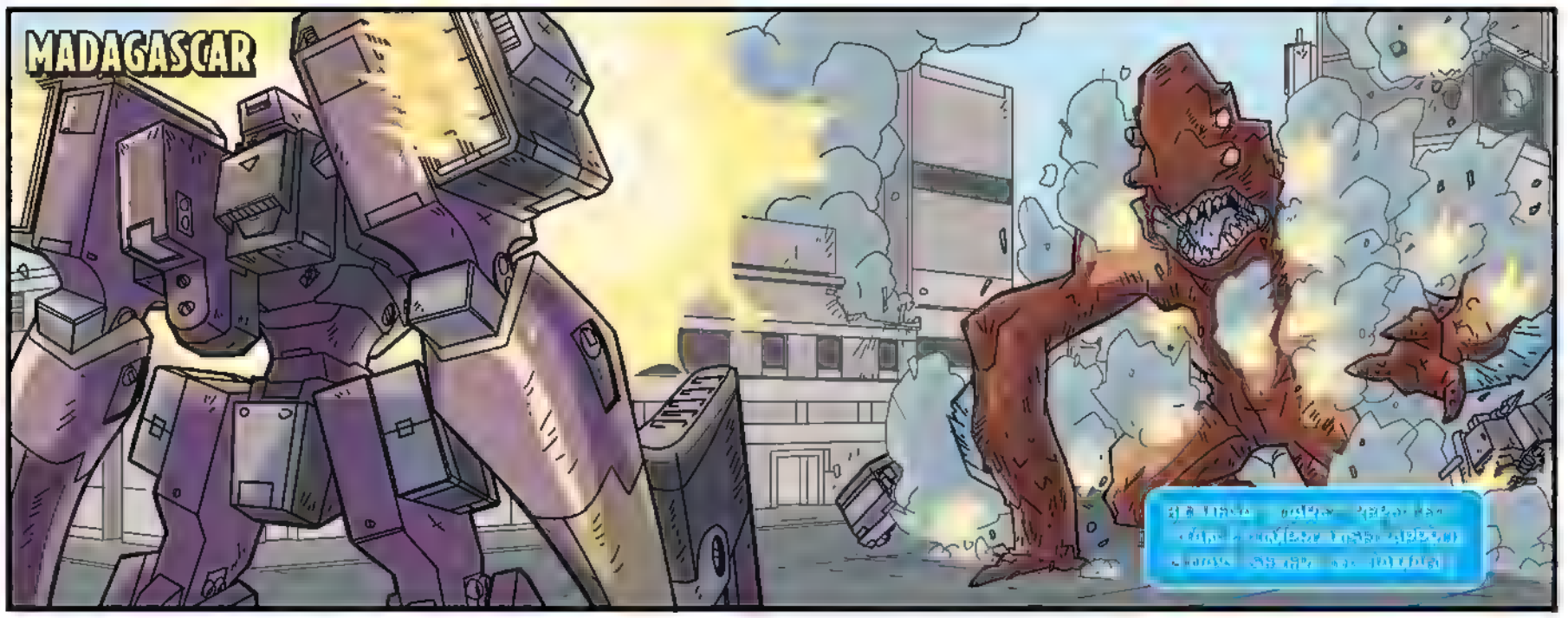
AND *THAT'S* WHY WE SCRAMBLE THESE CONVERSATIONS.

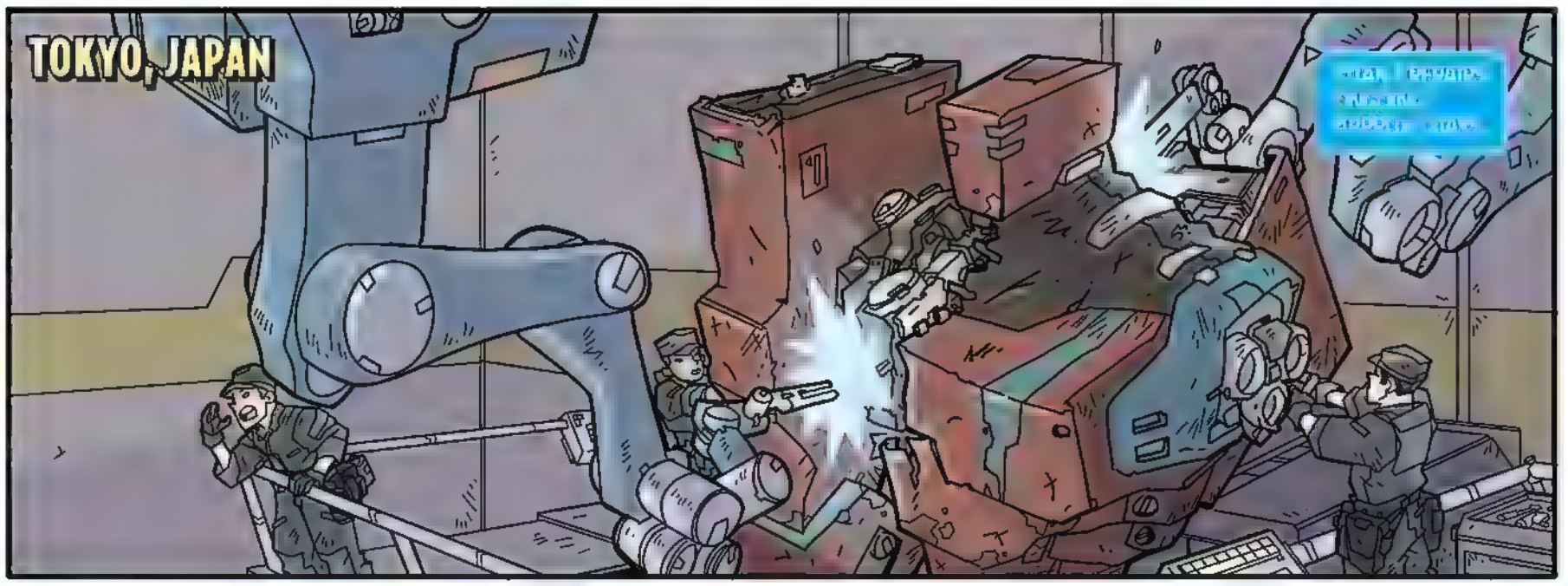
WE'LL BE LONG GONE BEFORE THEY FIGURE OUT WHAT WE DID.

THEY *COULD* RECREATE IT, YOU KNOW. WE'RE USING THEIR PARTS IN THEIR WORKSHOP WHILE UNDER THEIR SURVEILLANCE.

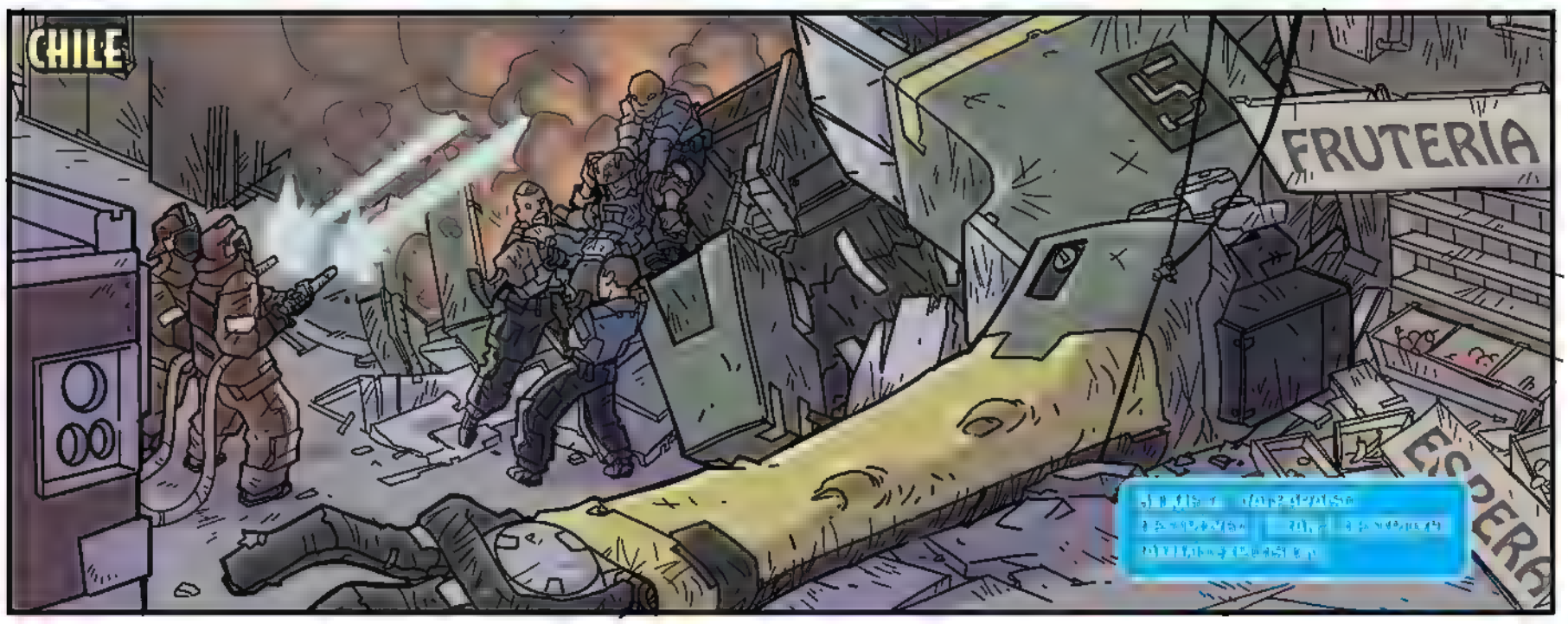
WE'D BE GIVING THEM A *HOW-TO.*

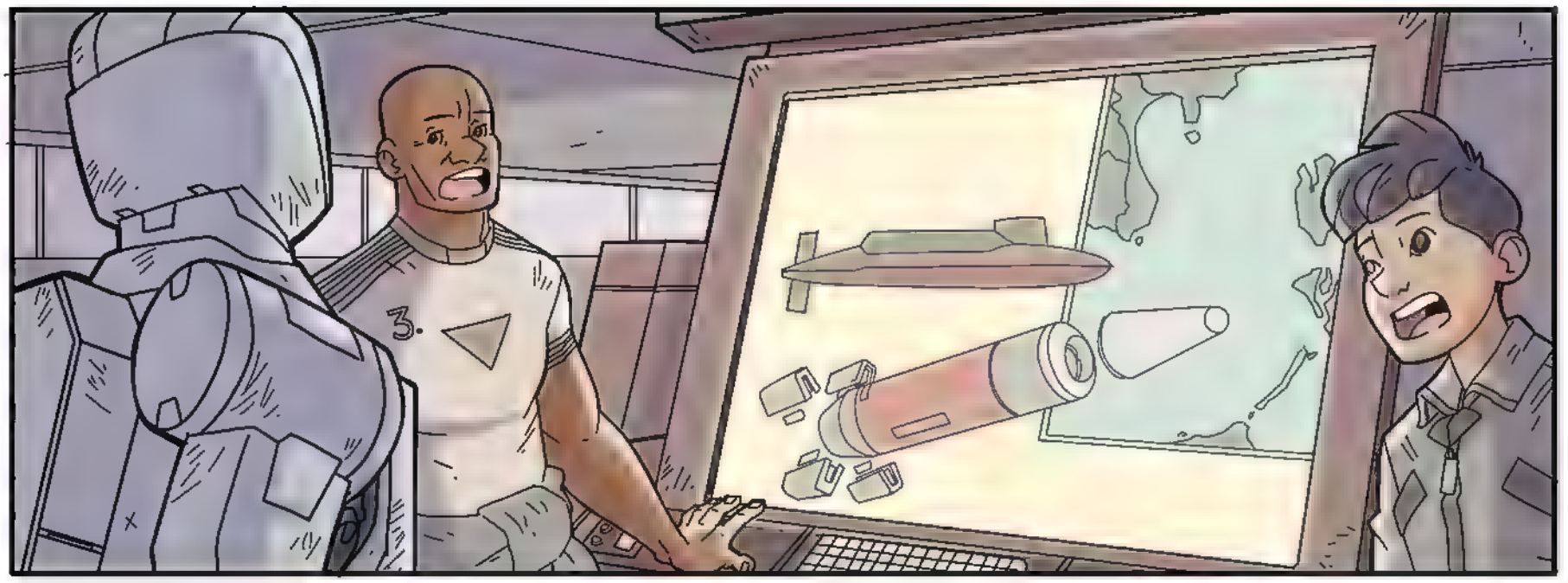
THEN LET'S ENGAGE IN SOME OLD-FASHIONED CHICANERY.


MADAGASCAR


TOKYO, JAPAN

QUEENSLAND


CHILE
FRUTERIA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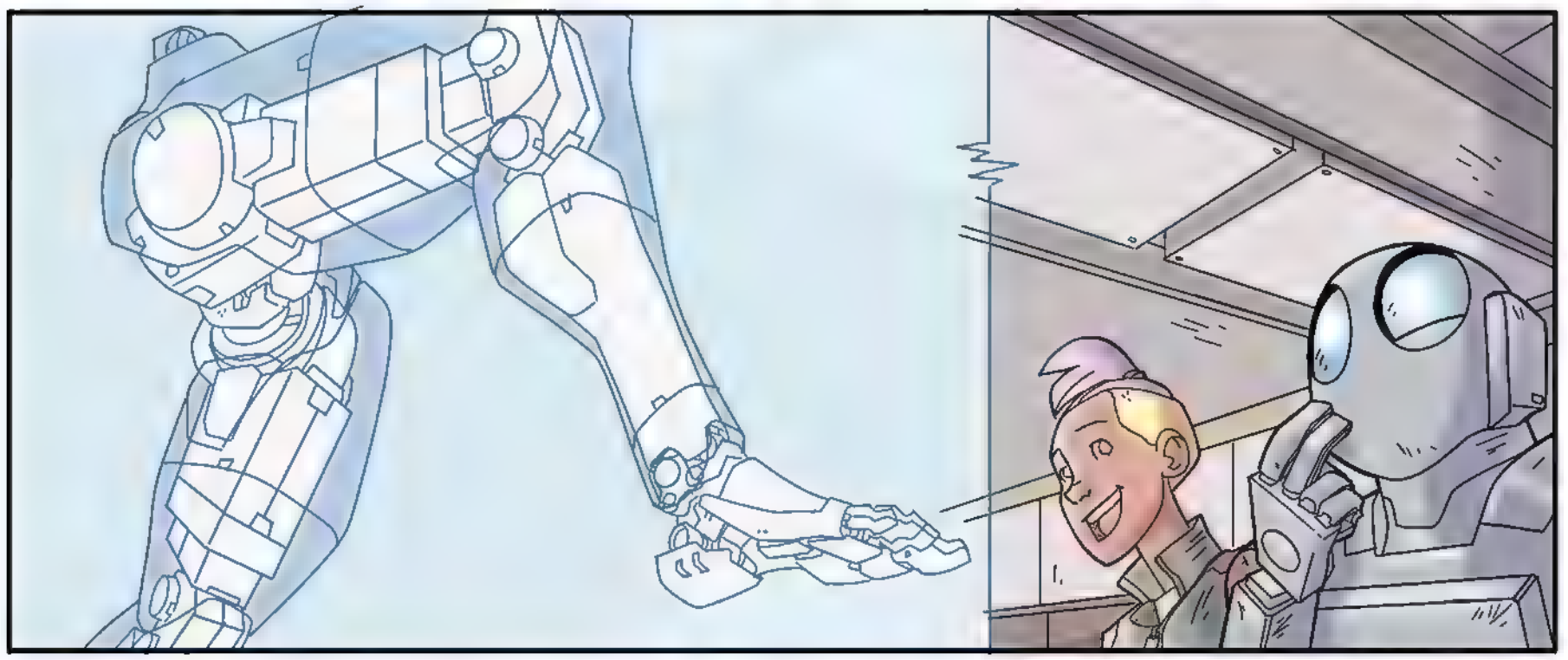
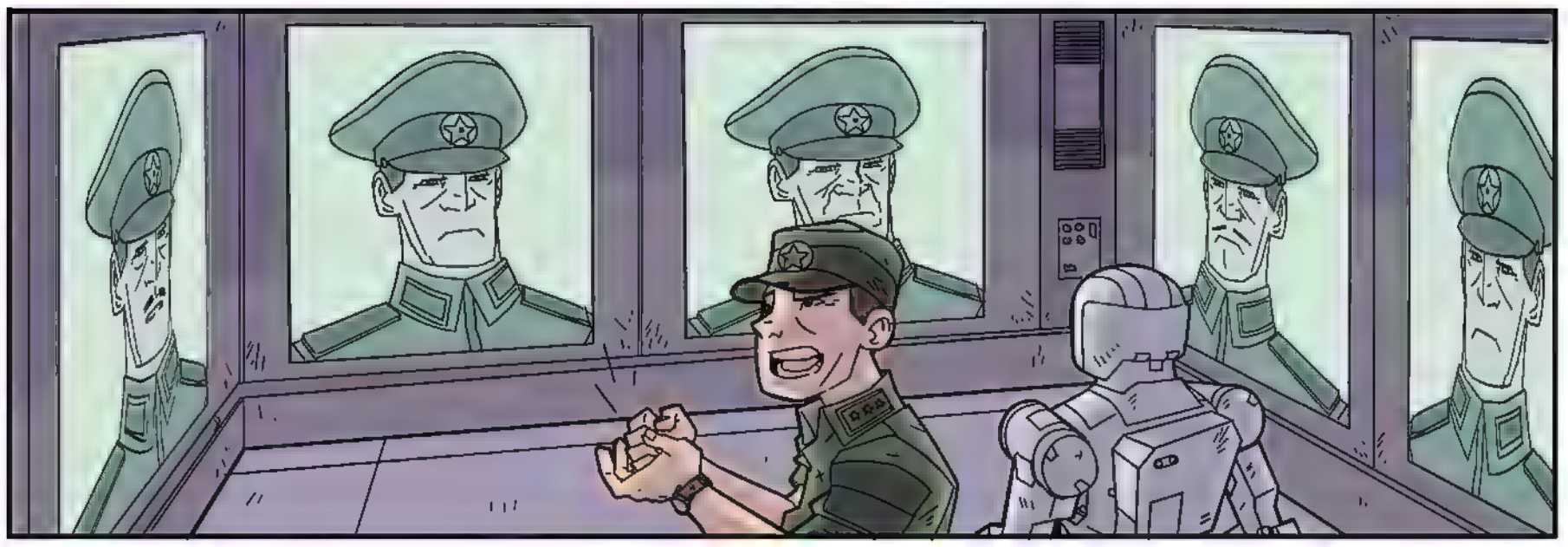




FOUR MISSIONS. *TWO* BIOMEGA KILLED. ONE TITAN LOST.

"WITHIN THE WEEK *ALL* REMAINING TITANS WILL BE BACK ONLINE.

"AND THE DEAD BIOMEGA WILL *STILL* BE DEAD.

"EVEN NOW, WE ARE ORGANIZING THE SINGLE LARGEST MOBILIZATION OF MATERIEL SINCE WORLD WAR II.

"*EACH* TITAN WILL RECEIVE TWO FULL CARRIER BATTLE GROUPS FOR LOGISTICAL AND FIRE SUPPORT.

BIOMEGA CANNOT HIDE FROM THE REACH OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.

WE ARE *WINNING.*

WHAT IF WE ***DON'T*** WIN?

BIOMEGA WILL RAMPAGE ACROSS THE WORLD UNCHECKED.

HUMANITY WILL DIE.

EVENTUALLY BIOMEGA WILL BE THE ONLY FORM OF LIFE LEFT.

THEY MIGHT MERGE INTO A SINGLE ***MEGAFAUNA.*** OR, IF THEY CAN METABOLIZE ROCK, THE EARTH ITSELF.

SHRUG

THEN THEY'LL COLONIZE THE SOLAR SYSTEM. PROBABLY THE GALAXY. ***THEN*** ANDROMEDA WHEN IT INTERSECTS THE MILKY WAY.

...OH.

SO, UH, WHAT'S OUR PLAN? LIKE HOW CAN ***ROBO*** STOP THESE THINGS?

DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY EXTINCTION LEVEL EVENTS HE'S PREVENTED?

NO.

ME NEITHER. PROBABLY NO ONE DOES. MOST ARE ***BEYOND*** CLASSIFIED.

THE ONES I ***DO*** KNOW ABOUT? THEY WERE ***SURPRISES.***

THIS ONE HE SEES COMING. ***AND*** HE'S GOT ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST MILITARIES FOR BACK UP.

NOT TO MENTION ***US.***

I DUNNO. I THINK ROBO *HATES* ME.

WHAT?!

HE'S ALWAYS CALLING ME NAMES.

FUNGUS GIRL. MS. MOSS. BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE MUSHROOM KID.

REALLY HAD TO *STRETCH* FOR THAT ONE.

OH, HE'S LIKE THAT WITH *EVERYONE* AT FIRST.

I WAS BIG RED, SIR YELLS-A-LOT, CAPTAIN ANGRY. A BUNCH OF OTHERS.

I THINK IT'S A DEFENSE MECHANISM.

IT'D KILL HIM TO GET CLOSE TO EVERYONE HE MEETS.

OR IT JUST TAKES HIM A WHILE TO REMEMBER NAMES. HE *IS* AN OLD MAN AFTER ALL.

IT'S A LITTLE OF BOTH.

ROBO!

TELLURIC PUMP SEEMS TO BE WORKING.

YUP. ALL METRICS GREEN. YOU'VE GOT ACCESS TO UP TO ONE PERCENT OF CHINA'S NUCLEAR POWER OUTPUT.

OKAY. LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD.

PHIL AND FOLEY GOT HUMPTY ROBO PUT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN.
OH. YEAH? GREAT.
YEAH. WE'RE MEETING WITH SHENG'S GUYS IN ABOUT AN HOUR TO GO OVER THE BIG PLAN.
YEAH. YUP. WILL DO.
YOU OKAY, MAN?
HM? YEAH. I'M GOOD. JUST TIRED. ALL THIS Y'KNOW, THE *EVERY-THING.*
YEAH. HEY, YOU SEEN LANG? CAN'T FIND HER ANYWHERE.
NNNYEAH. UH. EARLIER.
AND NOT HERE.
WELL, LET HER KNOW ABOUT THE MEETING IF YOU SEE HER.
THIS *CAN'T* HAPPEN AGAIN.
RIGHT. *YES.* AGREED.
BUT WE SAID THAT AFTER THE FREIGHTER TOO.
CLICK
BUT THIS TIME FOR *REAL.*

LET ME BEGIN BY THANKING GENERAL SHENG AND HIS SHADOWY UNNAMED SUPERIORS.

WITHOUT GRANTING US ***UNPRECEDENTED*** ACCESS TO PLA FACILITIES AND INTEL, ***NONE*** OF THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

OKAY. THE ESSENTIAL FLAW IN ULTRA'S STRATEGY IS THAT THEY HAVE TO WAIT FOR BIOMEGA TO SURFACE BEFORE THEY CAN USE THEIR TITANS.

THIS INVITES A ***HUGE*** AMOUNT OF COLLATERAL DAMAGE.

FOUR ENCOUNTERS HAVE RESULTED IN ***THOUSANDS*** OF DEATHS AND A ***SIGNIFICANT*** REDUCTION IN ULTRA'S ABILITY TO RESPOND TO NEW ATTACKS.

IN THEIR DEFENSE, THIS ***IS*** BETTER THAN THE ALTERNATIVE OF ALL OUT NUCLEAR RETALIATION AND THE END OF MANKIND.

IT WOULD TAKE AN ***APOCALYPTIC*** NUMBER OF NUKES TO GET THROUGH THEIR ARMOR. BUT THAT'S WHERE ***OUR*** PLAN COMES IN.

A BIOMEGA'S INTERNAL STRUCTURE IS ***HIGHLY*** VOLATILE.

RIGHT. THE HYPERMETABOLISM THE "HEAT RAYS," ***ALL*** THAT STUFF. IT'S INCREDIBLY ENERGETIC IN THERE.

IF WE CAN GET A NUKE ***THROUGH*** THEIR ARMOR AND ***THEN*** SET IT OFF, THAT SHOULD CAUSE A FATAL CHAIN REACTION AT A ***FRACTION*** OF THE FALLOUT.

AND WE DON'T WANT TO TOSS NUKES AROUND POPULATION CENTERS IN ANY EVENT, SO IT'S BEST TO ATTACK ***BEFORE*** THEY MAKE LANDFALL.

THEREFORE, THE IDEAL DELIVERY SYSTEM IS SUPERCAVITATING NUCLEAR TORPEDOES.

THE FORCE OF IMPACT ***SHOULD*** PIERCE THEIR ARMOR. THEN THE NUCLEAR WARHEAD GOES OFF AND ***COOKS*** THEM FROM THE INSIDE.

WE'LL ***STAGGER*** THE ATTACKS SO MY PEOPLE CAN SUPERVISE EACH RUN FROM A LONG RANGE BOMBER OVER THE TARGET.

ANYTHING GOES WRONG? ***I'M*** ON HAND TO AIRDROP IN.

ONCE THE SUBS ARE ARMED AND IN POSITION, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ELIMINATE ***ALL*** BIOMEGA IN A MATTER OF DAYS. ***ZERO*** CASUALTIES.

CAN YOU TELL WHAT THEY'RE SAYING?

THAT'S PRETTY RACIST, BERNIE.

I'VE HEARD YOU ***SPEAK*** CHINESE!

YOU ***HEARD*** CANTONESE. ***THEY'RE*** SPEAKING MANDARIN.

AND IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYWAY BECAUSE I CAN'T HEAR ANYTHING!

HOW DOES THIS ***DESTROY*** TASK FORCE ULTRA?

OUR SUCCESS WILL DEMONSTRATE THE FULL EXTENT OF ***THEIR*** FAILURES.

IT'LL KICK OFF A WORLDWIDE OUTCRY AGAINST THEIR ACTIONS AND THE ***NEEDLESS*** DEATHS AND DAMAGES THEY'VE ALREADY CAUSED.

THE ***WHOLE*** OPERATION WILL BE ***SCRAPPED.***

HOW CAN YOU BE ***SURE?***

THE NEAR EXTINCTION OF HUMANKIND WILL ***NOT*** PLAY WELL DURING ELECTION SEASON.

BIG SCIENCE INC, TOKYO
COMMAND CENTER, 02:17 LOCAL TIME

THAT *CAN'T* BE RIGHT.

bloop bloop bloop

ECHO-ONE, THIS IS ECHO-TWO STATION.

I'M PICKING UP AN ANOMALY TEN *MILES* WIDE. YEAH, GIVE ME A SWEEP.

BUT.

BUT IT'S *IMPOSSIBLE.*

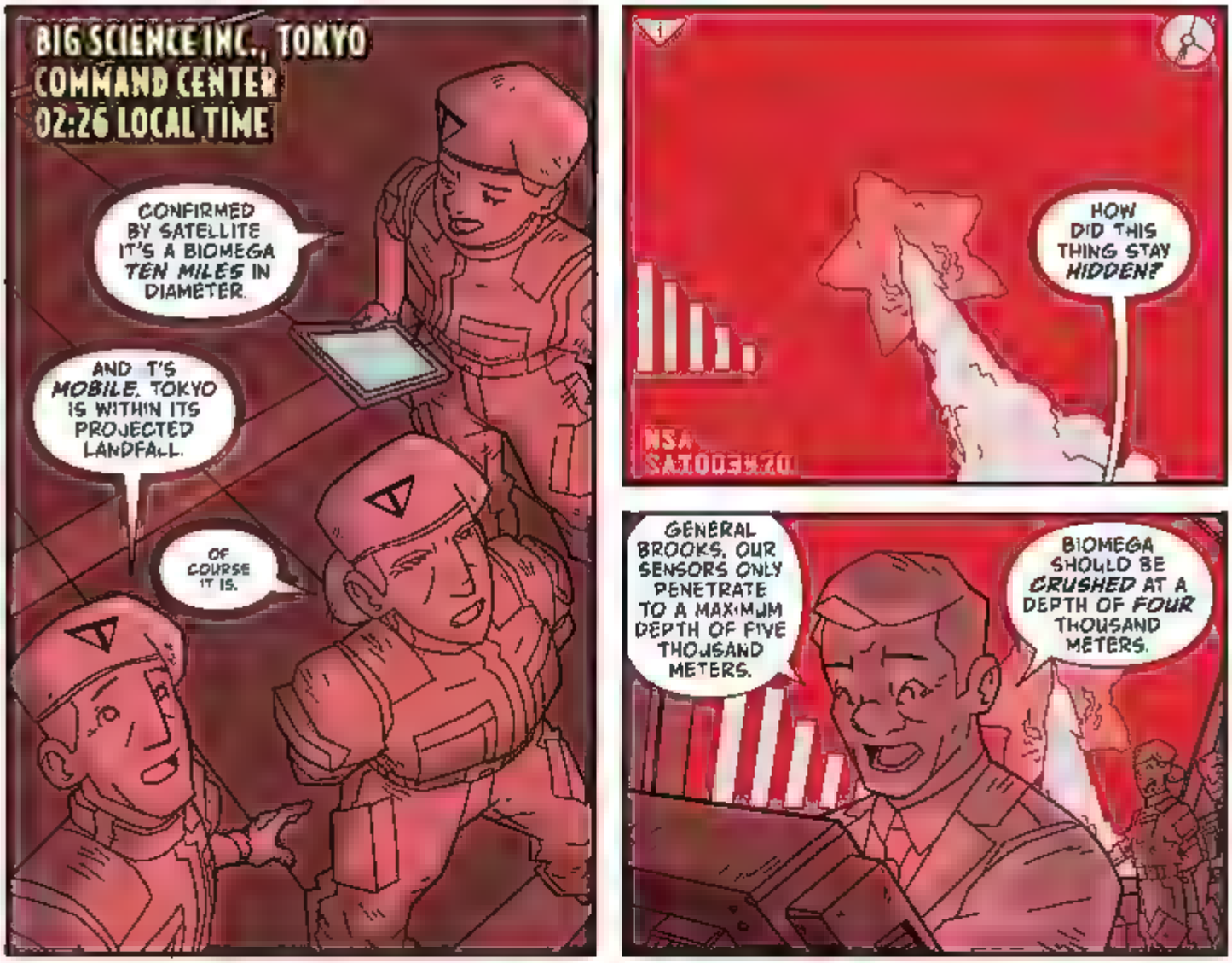
TOKYO

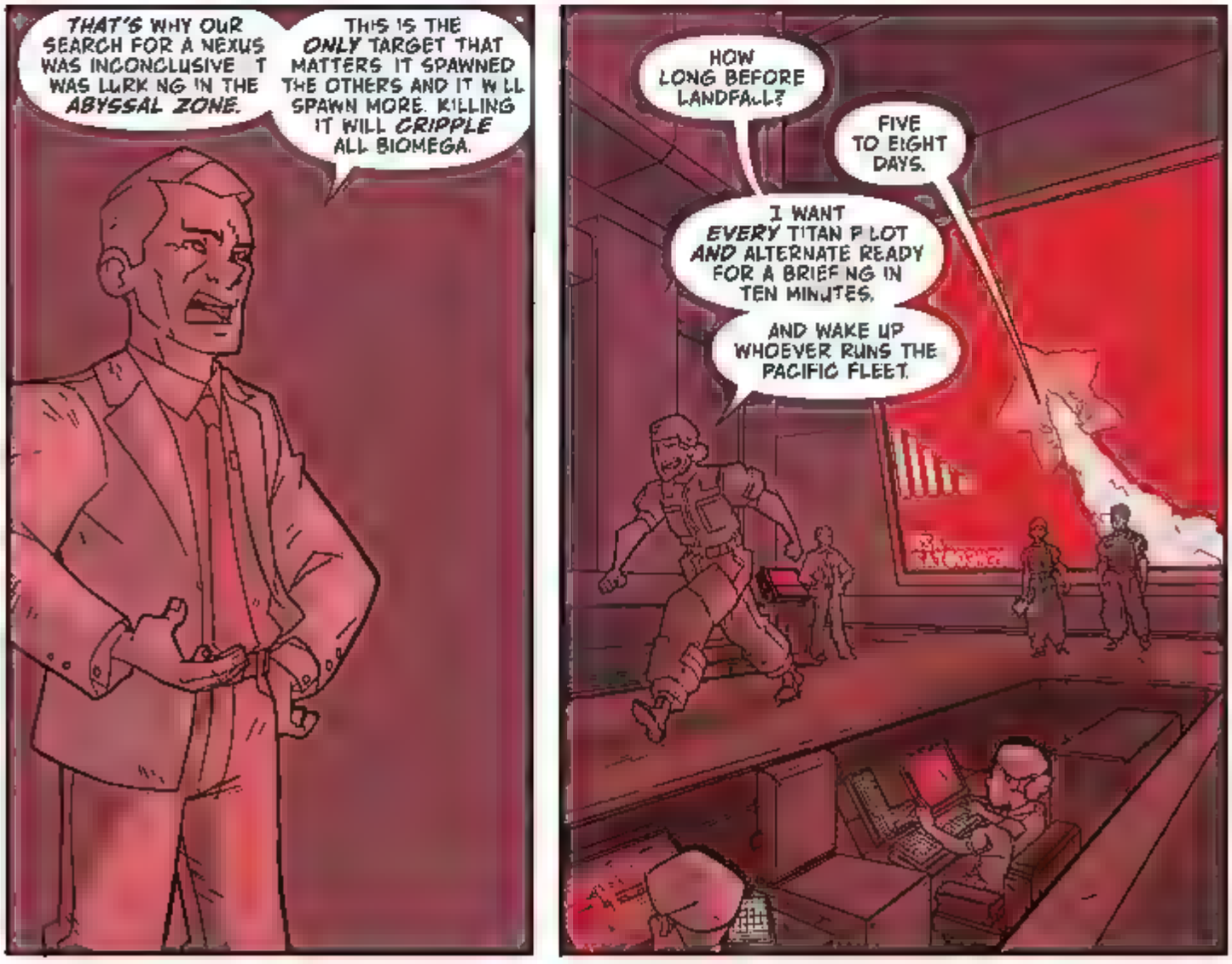
PRIORITY ONE EMERGENCE!

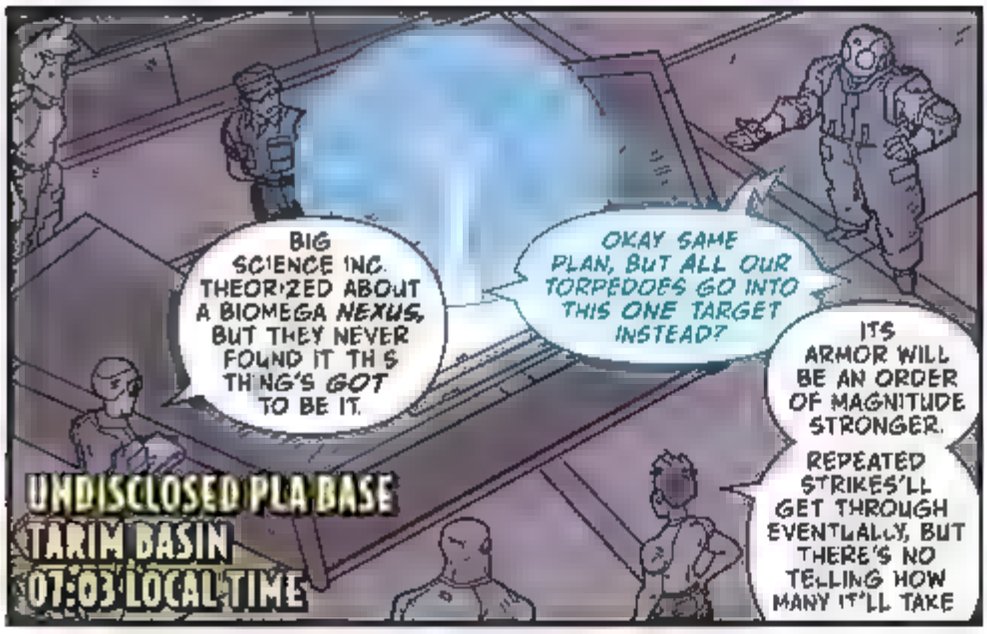
// BIOMEGA // 9

"IT'S AN ISLAND! *A BIOMEGA ISLAND!*"

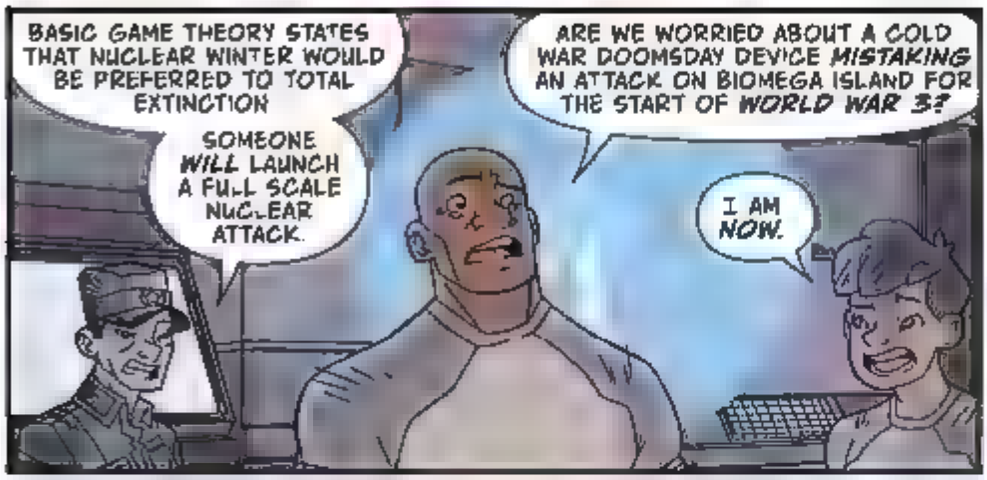
ATOMIC ROBO


BIG SCIENCE INC., TOKYO
COMMAND CENTER
02:26 LOCAL TIME
CONFIRMED BY SATELLITE IT'S A BIOMEGA *TEN MILES* IN DIAMETER.
AND IT'S *MOBILE*. TOKYO IS WITHIN ITS PROJECTED LANDFALL.
OF COURSE IT IS.
HOW DID THIS THING STAY *HIDDEN*?
GENERAL BROOKS, OUR SENSORS ONLY PENETRATE TO A MAXIMUM DEPTH OF FIVE THOUSAND METERS.
BIOMEGA SHOULD BE *CRUSHED* AT A DEPTH OF *FOUR* THOUSAND METERS.

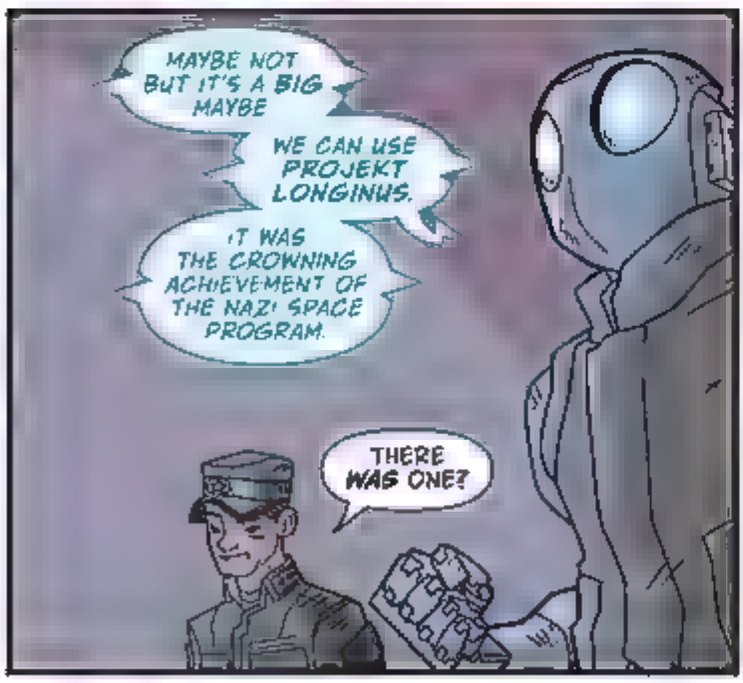

THAT'S WHY OUR SEARCH FOR A NEXUS WAS INCONCLUSIVE. IT WAS LURKING IN THE *ABYSSAL ZONE*.
THIS IS THE *ONLY* TARGET THAT MATTERS. IT SPAWNED THE OTHERS AND IT WILL SPAWN MORE. KILLING IT WILL *CRIPPLE* ALL BIOMEGA.
HOW LONG BEFORE LANDFALL?
FIVE TO EIGHT DAYS.
I WANT *EVERY* TITAN PILOT *AND* ALTERNATE READY FOR A BRIEFING IN TEN MINUTES.
AND WAKE UP WHOEVER RUNS THE PACIFIC FLEET.

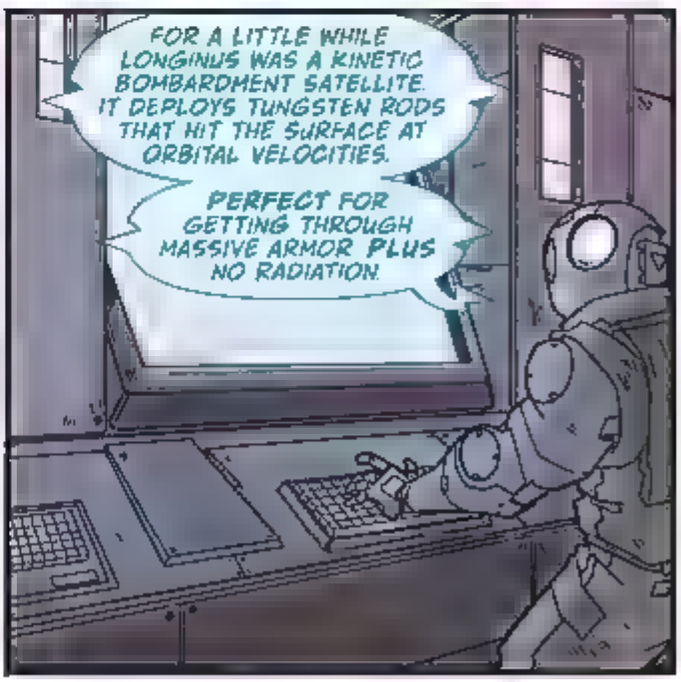

BIG SCIENCE INC. THEORIZED ABOUT A BIOMEGA *NEXUS*, BUT THEY NEVER FOUND IT TH S TH NG'S *GOT* TO BE IT.
OKAY SAME PLAN, BUT ALL OUR TORPEDOES GO INTO THIS ONE TARGET INSTEAD?
ITS ARMOR WILL BE AN ORDER OF MAGNITUDE STRONGER.
REPEATED STRIKES'LL GET THROUGH EVENTUALLY, BUT THERE'S NO TELLING HOW MANY IT'LL TAKE
UNDISCLOSED PLA BASE
TARIM BASIN
07:03 LOCAL TIME

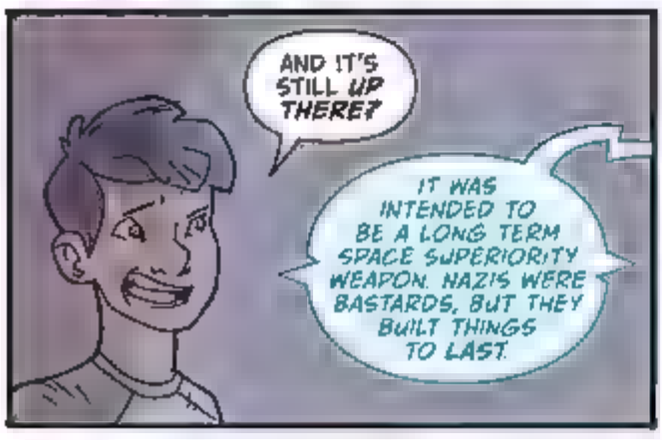
MIGHT NOT MATTER. IT WEIGHS *MILLIONS OF TONS*. SETTING OFF NUKES *IN* IT M GHT DO AS MUCH DAMAGE AS A *BURP*
THAT BRINGS US BACK TO BRUTE FORCE THERE'S ONLY *ONE* WAY TO KILL A BIOMEGA THAT BIG, AND DOING IT WILL CAUSE NUCLEAR WINTER
WE'RE TALKING *BILLIONS* DEAD BEFORE AGRICULTURE CAN BE STARTED AGAIN.

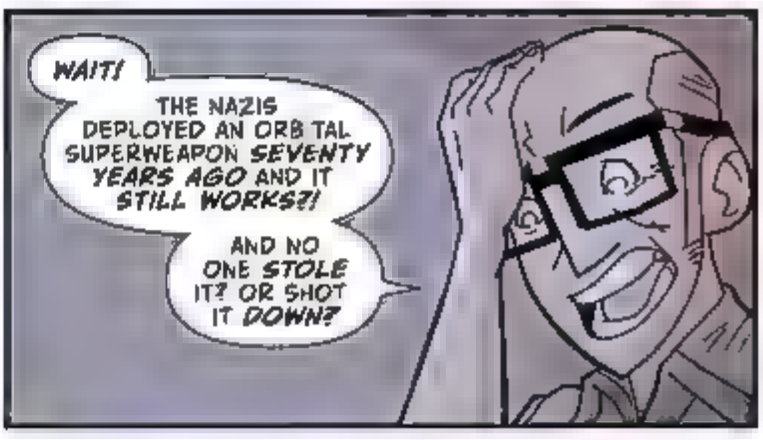

BASIC GAME THEORY STATES THAT NUCLEAR WINTER WOULD BE PREFERRED TO TOTAL EXTINCTION
SOMEONE *WILL* LAUNCH A FULL SCALE NUCLEAR ATTACK.
ARE WE WORRIED ABOUT A COLD WAR DOOMSDAY DEVICE *MISTAKING* AN ATTACK ON BIOMEGA ISLAND FOR THE START OF *WORLD WAR 3*?
I AM *NOW*.

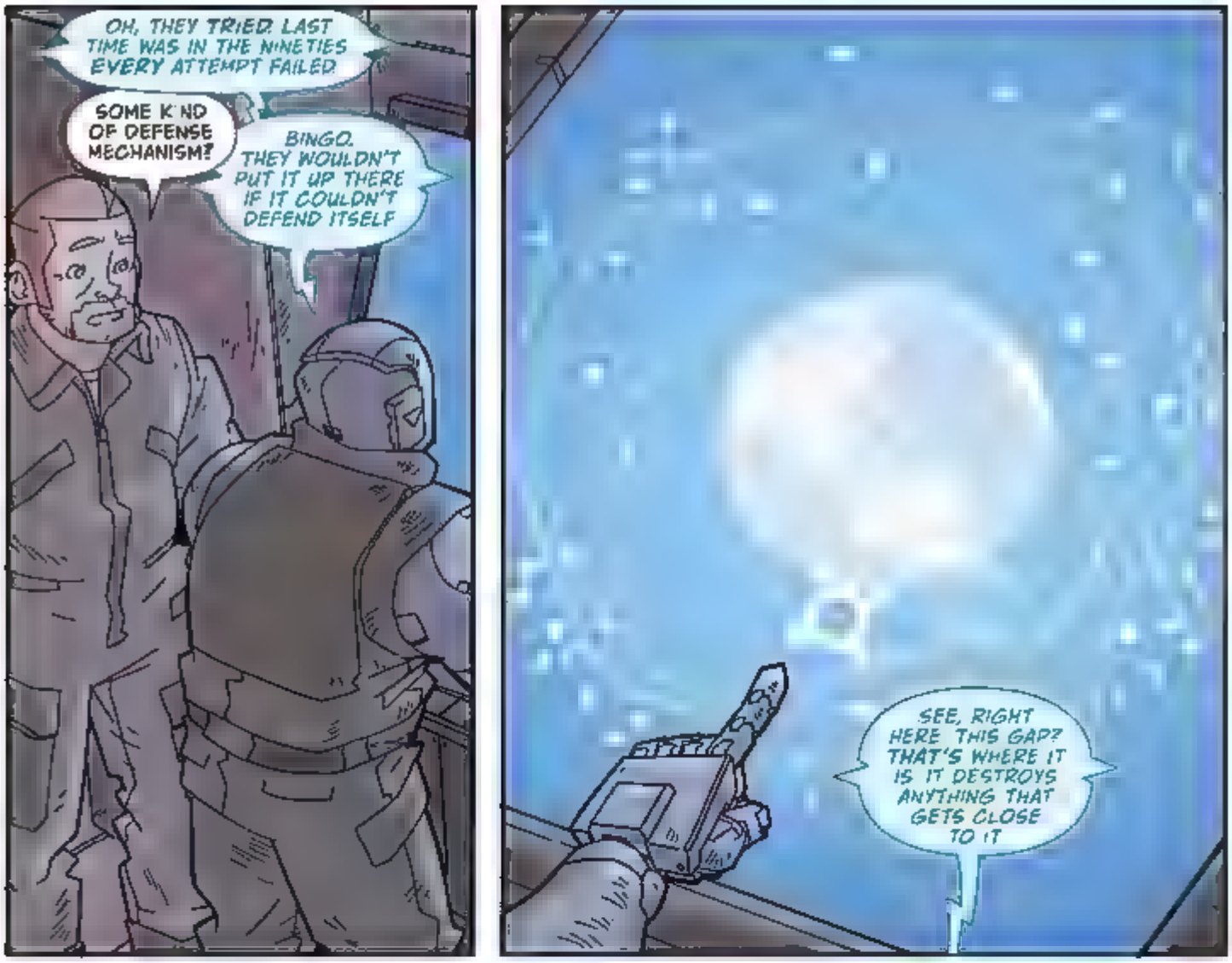
SO ALL WE NEED IS A MIRACLE WEAPON AS *POWERFUL* AS NUKES BUT *WITHOUT* RADIATION? ALSO READY TO DEPLOY IN MASSIVE NUMBERS?
WE'RE *DEAD*.
SHRRRR

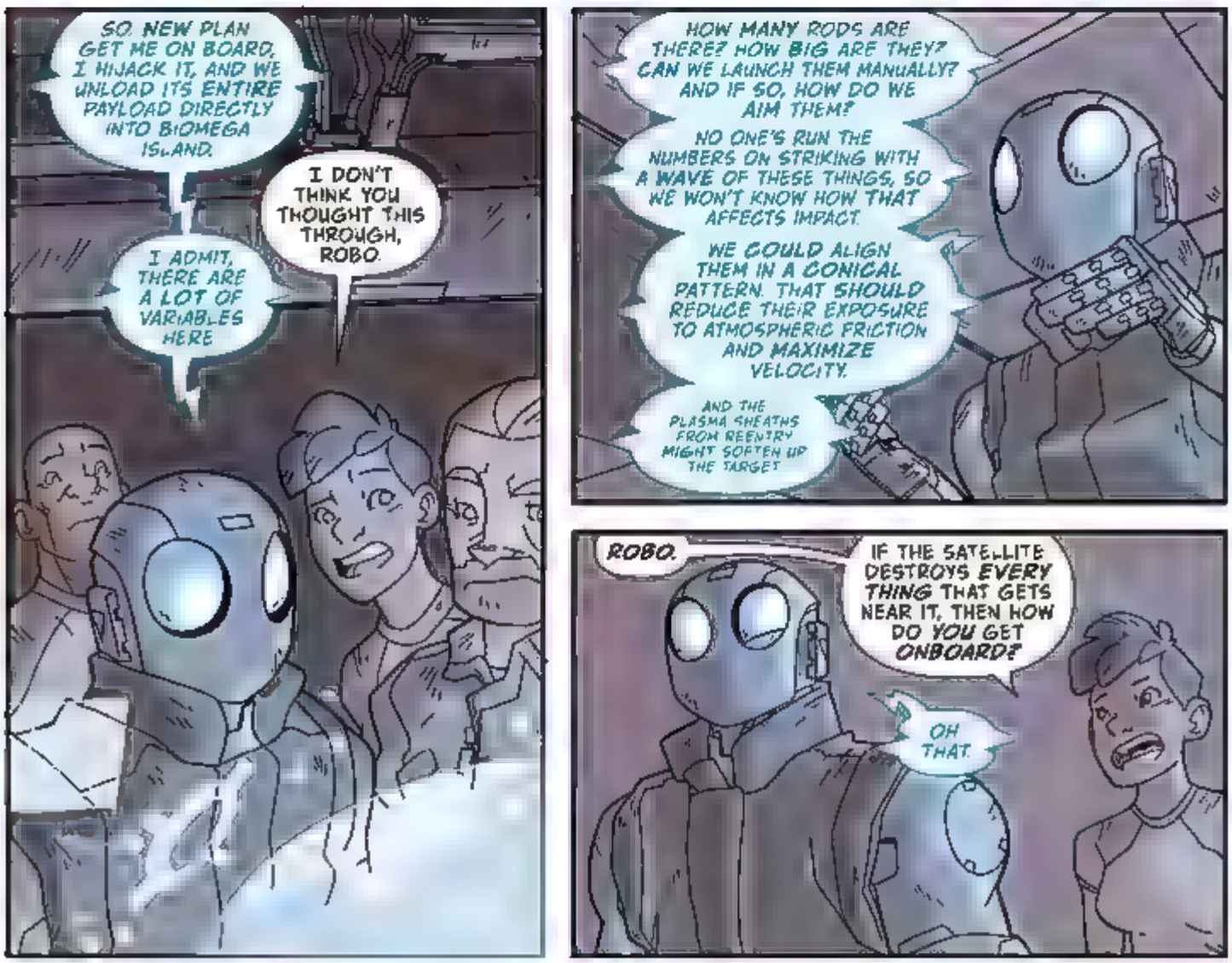

MAYBE NOT BUT IT'S A *BIG* MAYBE
WE CAN USE *PROJEKT LONGINUS*.
IT WAS THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE NAZI SPACE PROGRAM.
THERE *WAS* ONE?

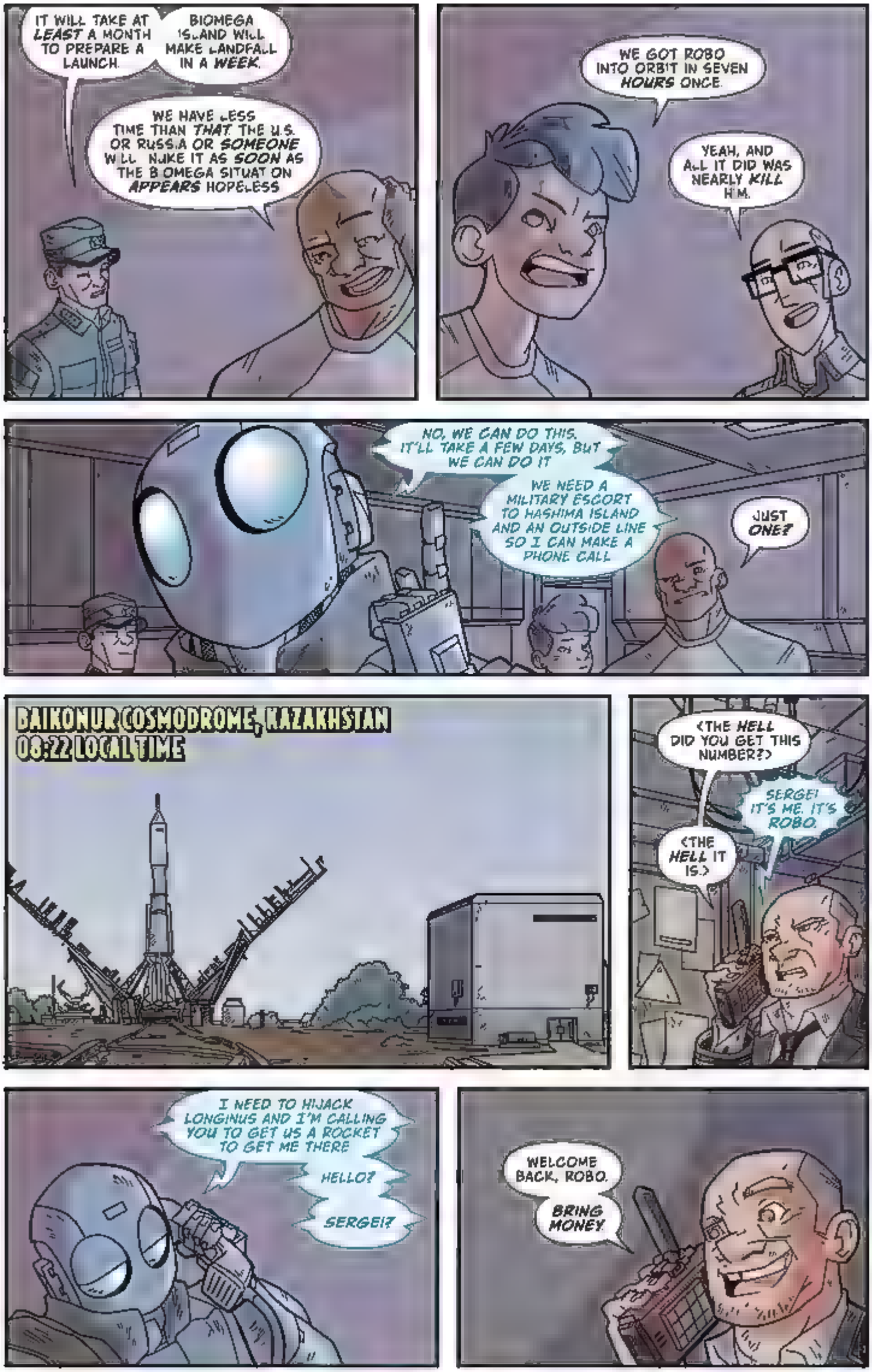

FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGINUS WAS A KINETIC BOMBARDMENT SATELLITE. IT DEPLOYS TUNGSTEN RODS THAT HIT THE SURFACE AT ORBITAL VELOCITIES.
PERFECT FOR GETTING THROUGH MASSIVE ARMOR *PLUS* NO RADIATION.


AND IT'S STILL *UP THERE*?
IT WAS INTENDED TO BE A LONG TERM SPACE SUPERIORITY WEAPON. NAZIS WERE BASTARDS, BUT THEY BUILT THINGS TO LAST.

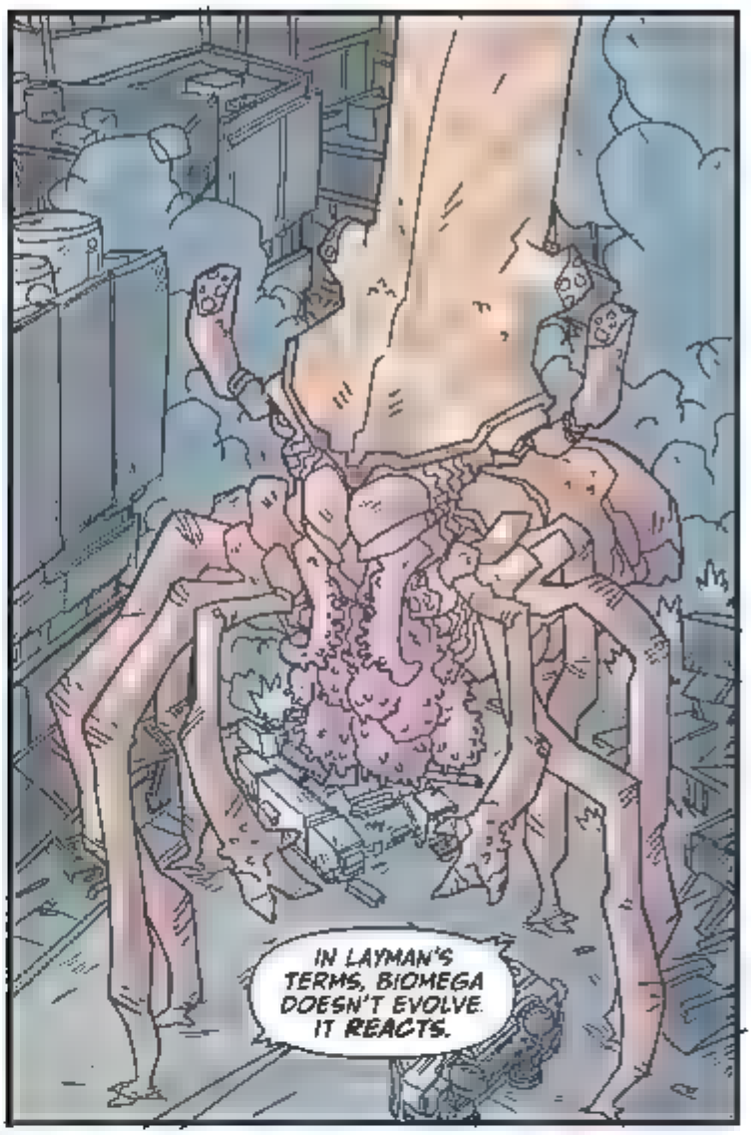

WAIT!
THE NAZIS DEPLOYED AN ORB TAL SUPERWEAPON *SEVENTY YEARS AGO* AND IT *STILL WORKS*?!
AND NO ONE *STOLE* IT? OR SHOT IT *DOWN*?

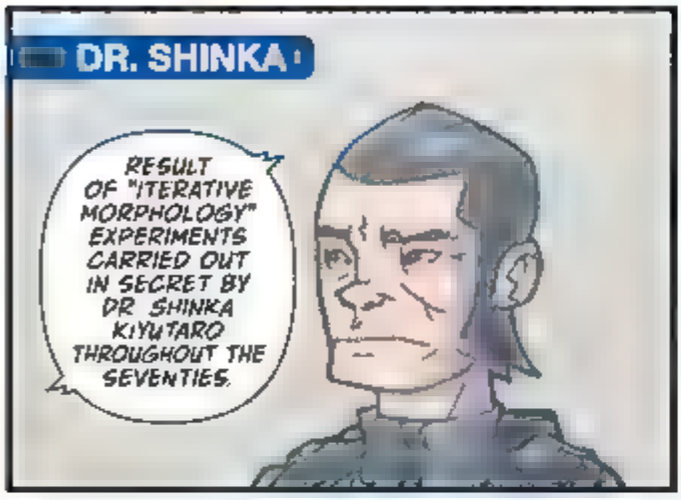

OH, THEY TRIED. LAST TIME WAS IN THE NINETIES. EVERY ATTEMPT FAILED.
SOME KIND OF DEFENSE MECHANISM?
BINGO. THEY WOULDN'T PUT IT UP THERE IF IT COULDN'T DEFEND ITSELF
SEE, RIGHT HERE. THIS GAP? THAT'S WHERE IT IS. IT DESTROYS ANYTHING THAT GETS CLOSE TO IT

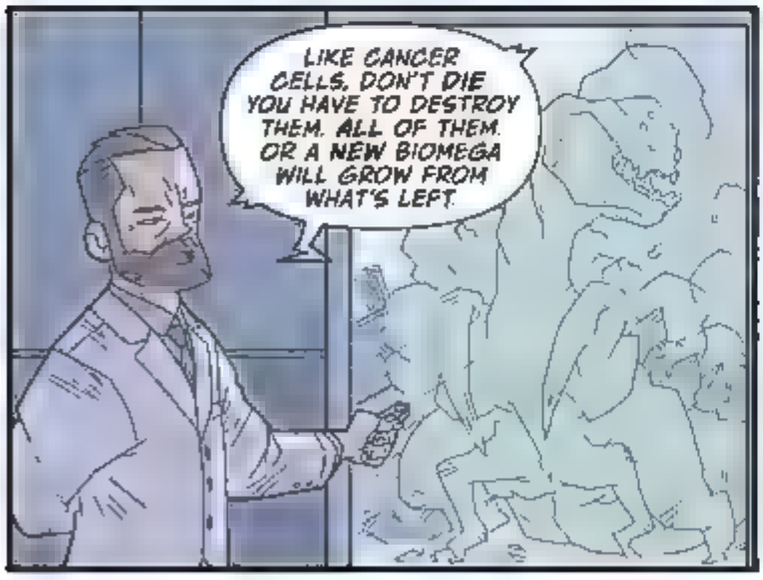

SO. NEW PLAN. GET ME ON BOARD, I HIJACK IT, AND WE UNLOAD ITS ENTIRE PAYLOAD DIRECTLY INTO BIOMEGA ISLAND.
I DON'T THINK YOU THOUGHT THIS THROUGH, ROBO.
I ADMIT, THERE ARE A LOT OF VARIABLES HERE
HOW MANY RODS ARE THERE? HOW BIG ARE THEY? CAN WE LAUNCH THEM MANUALLY? AND IF SO, HOW DO WE AIM THEM?
NO ONE'S RUN THE NUMBERS ON STRIKING WITH A WAVE OF THESE THINGS, SO WE WON'T KNOW HOW THAT AFFECTS IMPACT.
WE COULD ALIGN THEM IN A CONICAL PATTERN. THAT SHOULD REDUCE THEIR EXPOSURE TO ATMOSPHERIC FRICTION AND MAXIMIZE VELOCITY.
AND THE PLASMA SHEATHS FROM REENTRY MIGHT SOFTEN UP THE TARGET
ROBO.
IF THE SATELLITE DESTROYS EVERY THING THAT GETS NEAR IT, THEN HOW DO YOU GET ONBOARD?
OH THAT.


IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST A MONTH TO PREPARE A LAUNCH.
BIOMEGA ISLAND WILL MAKE LANDFALL IN A WEEK.
WE HAVE LESS TIME THAN THAT. THE U.S. OR RUSSIA OR SOMEONE WILL NUKE IT AS SOON AS THE BIOMEGA SITUATION APPEARS HOPELESS
WE GOT ROBO INTO ORBIT IN SEVEN HOURS ONCE.
YEAH, AND ALL IT DID WAS NEARLY KILL HIM.
NO, WE CAN DO THIS. IT'LL TAKE A FEW DAYS, BUT WE CAN DO IT
WE NEED A MILITARY ESCORT TO HASHIMA ISLAND AND AN OUTSIDE LINE SO I CAN MAKE A PHONE CALL
JUST ONE?
BAIKONUR COSMODROME, KAZAKHSTAN
08:22 LOCAL TIME
<THE HELL DID YOU GET THIS NUMBER?>
SERGE! IT'S ME. IT'S ROBO.
<THE HELL IT IS.>
I NEED TO HIJACK LONGINUS AND I'M CALLING YOU TO GET US A ROCKET TO GET ME THERE
HELLO?
SERGEI?
WELCOME BACK, ROBO.
BRING MONEY.

LARGEST BIOMEGA BY A FACTOR OF SEVERAL MILLION.


IN LAYMAN'S TERMS, BIOMEGA DOESN'T EVOLVE. IT REACTS.

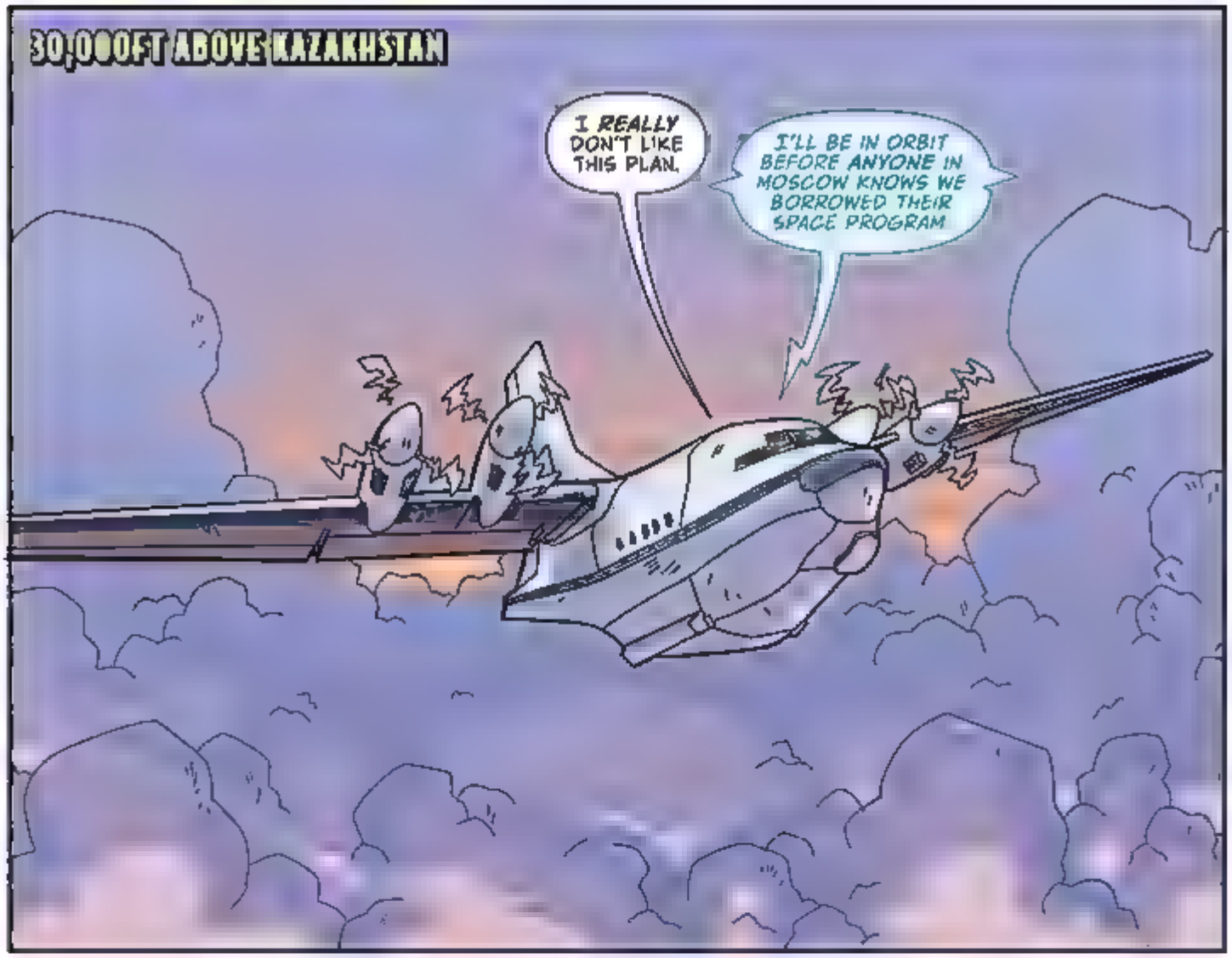

DR. SHINKA
RESULT OF "ITERATIVE MORPHOLOGY" EXPERIMENTS CARRIED OUT IN SECRET BY DR. SHINKA KIYUTARO THROUGHOUT THE SEVENTIES.

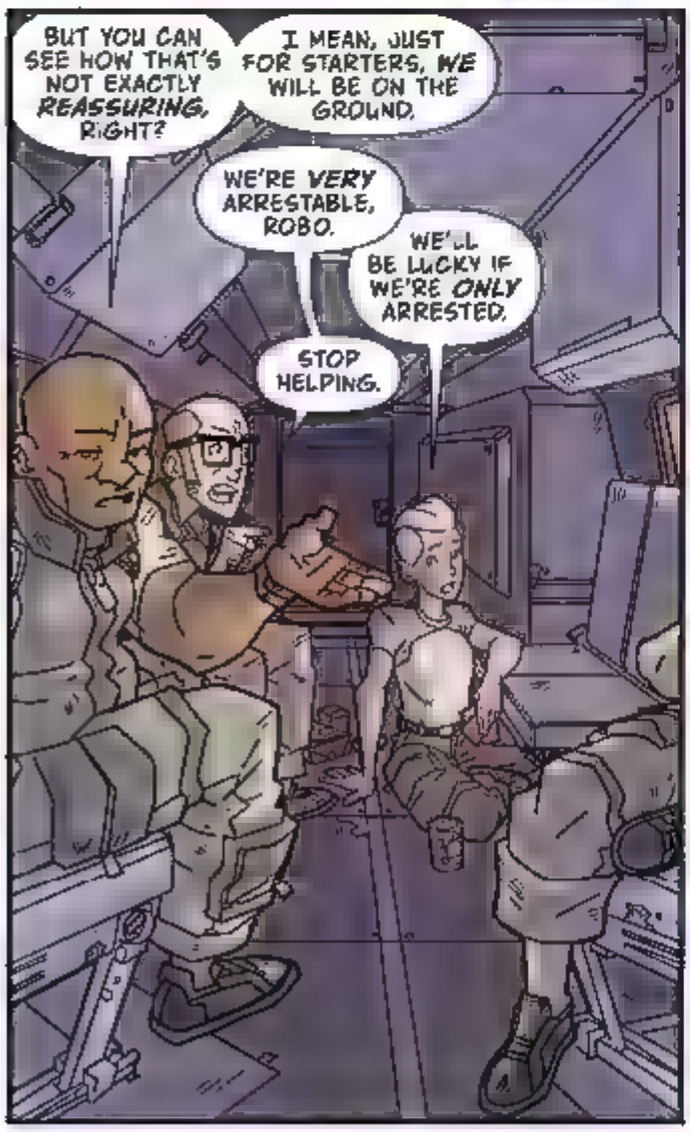

LIKE CANCER CELLS, DON'T DIE YOU HAVE TO DESTROY THEM. ALL OF THEM. OR A NEW BIOMEGA WILL GROW FROM WHAT'S LEFT.

OFFICIALS NEITHER CONFIRMING NOR DENYING WHAT MANY CONSIDER TO BE INEVITABLE, THE NUCLEAR OPTION.

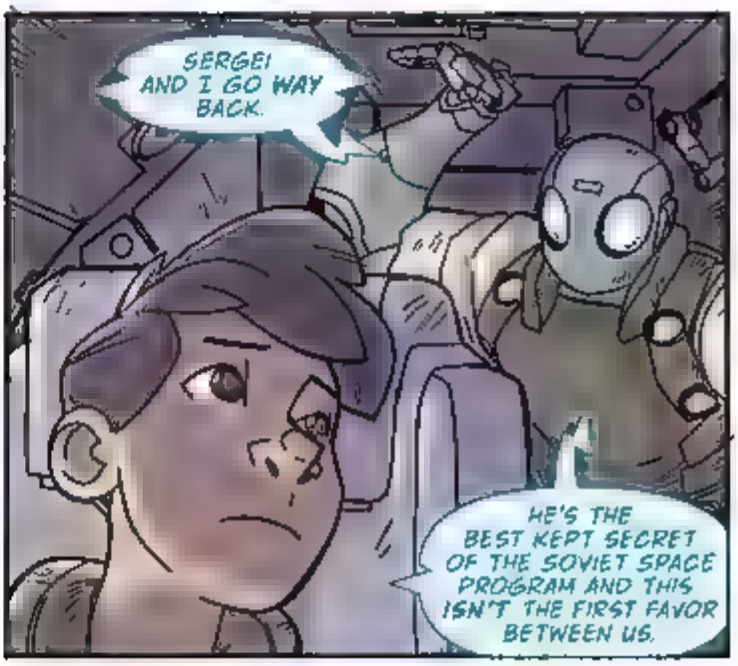
OND DAY OF RIOTING THROUGHOUT JAPAN AS AUTHORITIES ATTEMPT TO EVACU

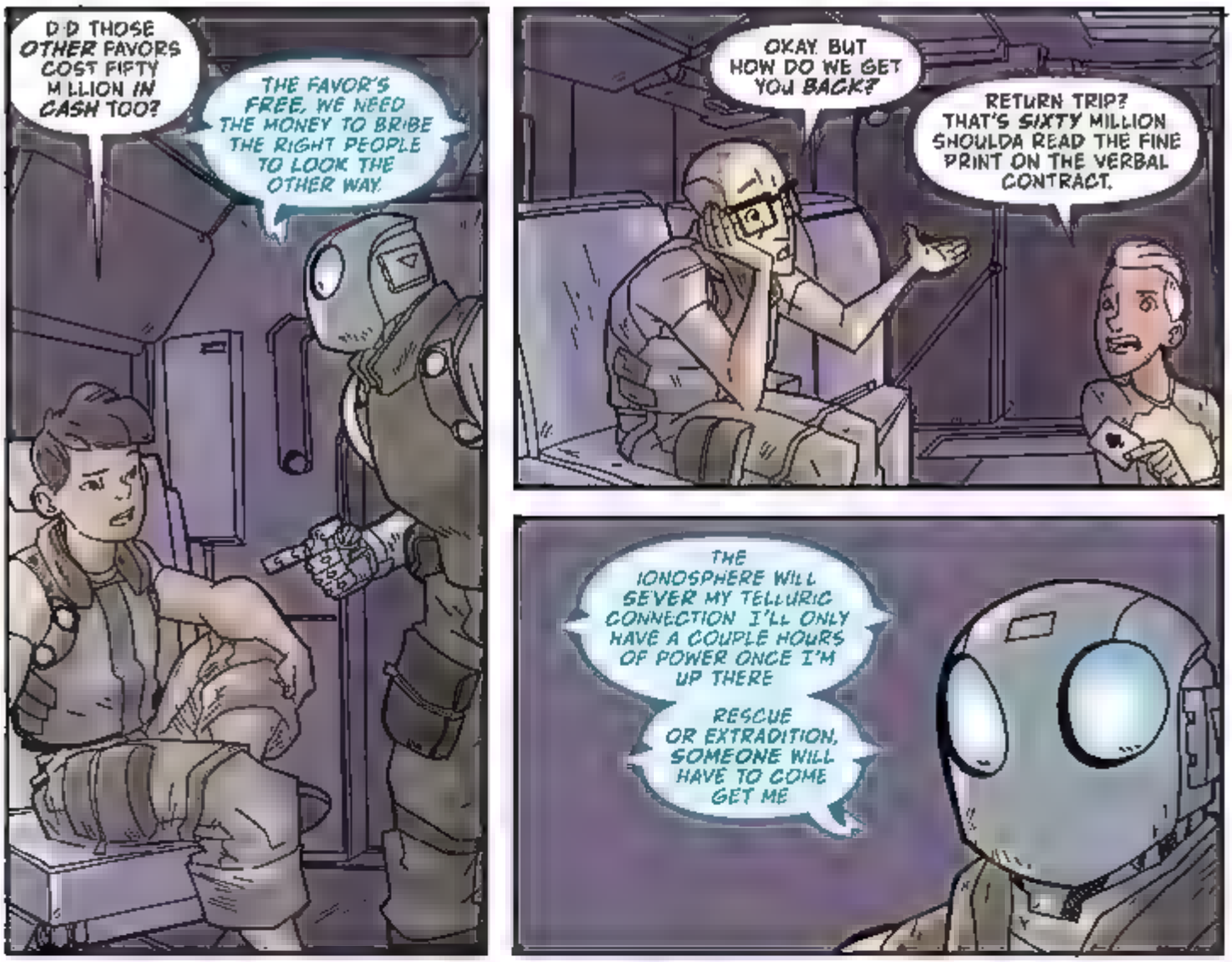
THIS ISLAND *IS* THE SHINKABEAST LAST SEEN IN 1999.
THE OTHER BIOMEGA ARE MORE LIKE ITS EXTENDED SENSORY ORGANS. THEY WILL WITHER AND *DIE* WITHOUT SHINKA.
OUR TITANS DON'T HAVE *NEARLY* THE FIRE-POWER TO STOP IT. THERE IS ONLY *ONE* SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM, AND IT IS *THERMONUCLEAR.*
THE FOUR REMAINING TITANS WILL BE DEPLOYED AS SHINKA APPROACHES TOKYO BAY.
THE INTERIOR CORE APPEARS TO BE *MOLTEN,* SO WE CAN'T CONDUCT A *DIRECT* ATTACK.
THE TITANS WILL USE A CONCENTRATION OF GAUSS-SCRAM FIRE TO PIERCE THE ARMOR LAYER AWAY FROM THE CORE.
"THE PACIFIC FLEET WILL THEN DELIVER AS MANY HYDROGEN BOMBS AS NECESSARY DIRECTLY INTO THAT WOUND.
"DOING SO WILL HELP TO MINIMIZE THE SPREAD OF FALLOUT IT SHOULD ALSO AVERT NUCLEAR WINTER AT THE COST OF POISONING THE TOKYO BAY AREA.
"WE'RE HELPING TO COORDINATE EVACUATIONS. THE CLEANUP EFFORT WILL BE *MASSIVE.* MUCH OF THE CITY WILL BE UNINHABITABLE FOR GENERATIONS.
"A SMALL PRICE TO SAVE SEVEN AND A HALF *BILLION* LIVES."

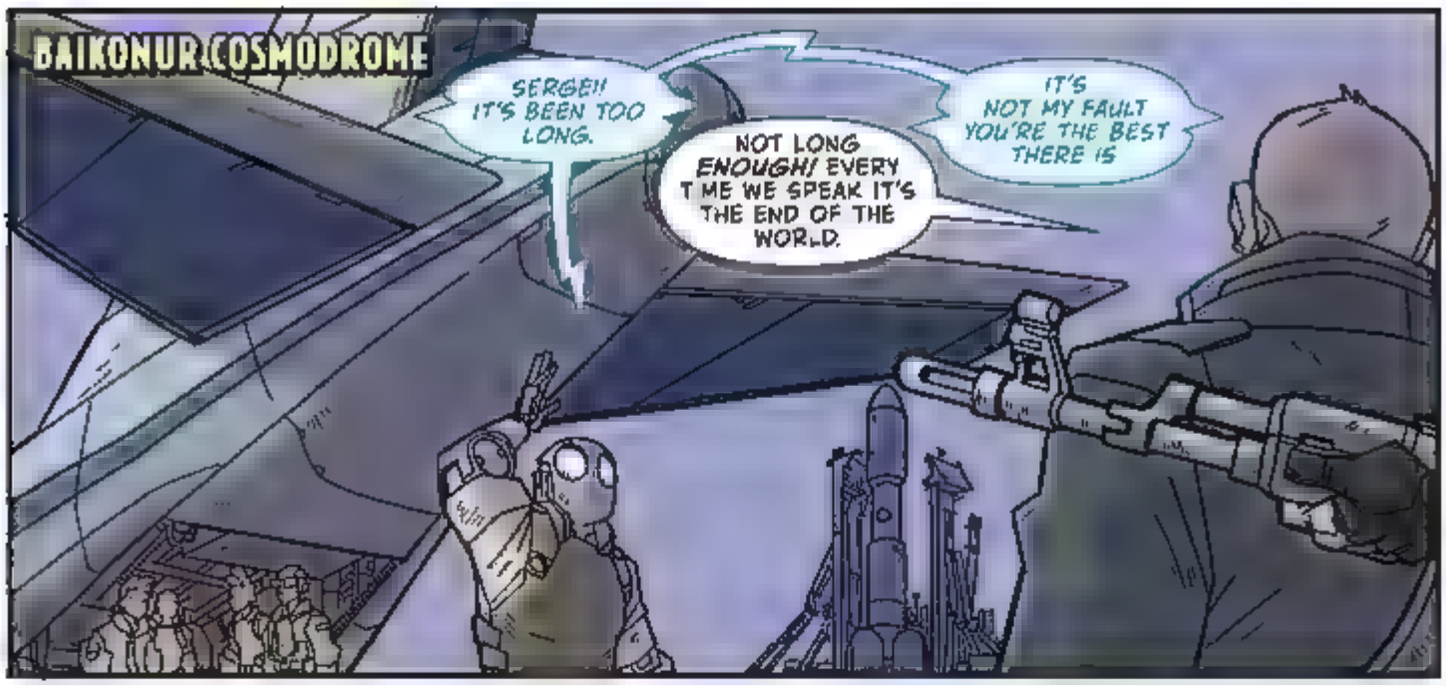

30,000FT ABOVE KAZAKHSTAN
I REALLY DON'T LIKE THIS PLAN.
I'LL BE IN ORBIT BEFORE ANYONE IN MOSCOW KNOWS WE BORROWED THEIR SPACE PROGRAM

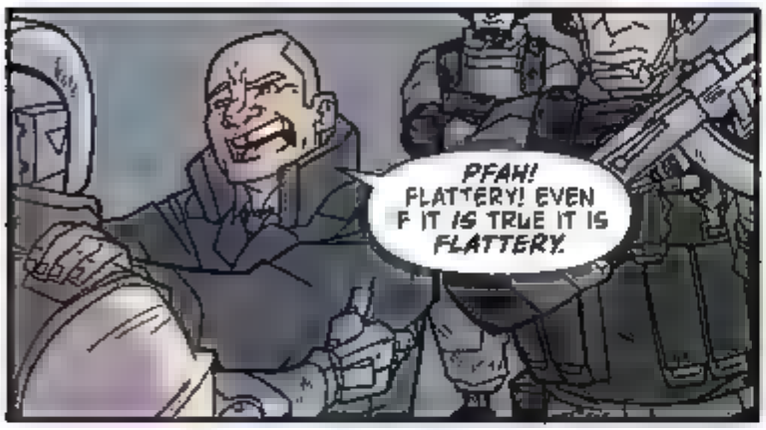

BUT YOU CAN SEE HOW THAT'S NOT EXACTLY REASSURING, RIGHT?
I MEAN, JUST FOR STARTERS, WE WILL BE ON THE GROUND.
WE'RE VERY ARRESTABLE, ROBO.
WE'LL BE LUCKY IF WE'RE ONLY ARRESTED.
STOP HELPING.

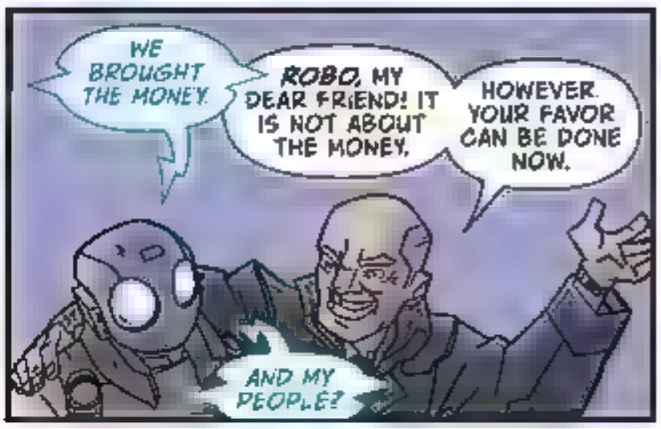
OH, WHAT'S TO WORRY ABOUT?
IT'S NOT LIKE THE SHADY RUSSIAN BLACK MARKET GUY COULD TOTALLY SCREW US.


SERGEI AND I GO WAY BACK.
HE'S THE BEST KEPT SECRET OF THE SOVIET SPACE PROGRAM AND THIS ISN'T THE FIRST FAVOR BETWEEN US.

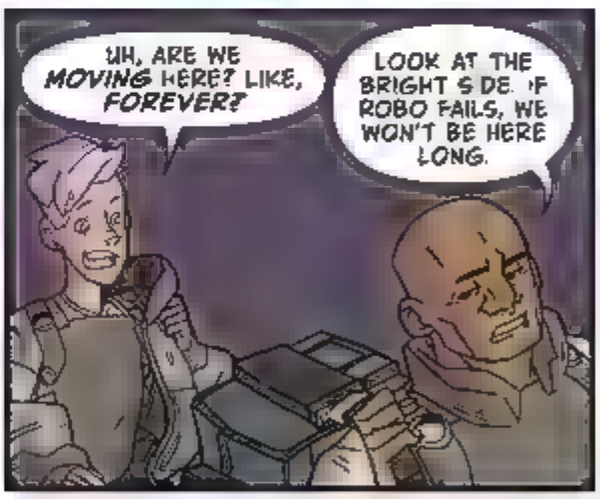

D'D THOSE OTHER FAVORS COST FIFTY MILLION IN CASH TOO?
THE FAVOR'S FREE, WE NEED THE MONEY TO BRIBE THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY.
OKAY, BUT HOW DO WE GET YOU BACK?
RETURN TRIP? THAT'S SIXTY MILLION SHOULDA READ THE FINE PRINT ON THE VERBAL CONTRACT.
THE IONOSPHERE WILL SEVER MY TELLURIC CONNECTION I'LL ONLY HAVE A COUPLE HOURS OF POWER ONCE I'M UP THERE
RESCUE OR EXTRADITION, SOMEONE WILL HAVE TO COME GET ME
HOLD IT, A COUPLE HOURS? HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO REACH LONGINUS?
AND THEN BOARD IT? AND THEN HIJACK IT? AND THEN GET IT INTO POSITION? AND THEN ARM IT, AIM IT, AND FIRE?
FIND OUT WHEN WE GET THERE
OH, GOOD. I WAS AFRAID THIS ONE WASN'T GONNA BE IMPOSS BLE ENOUGH.

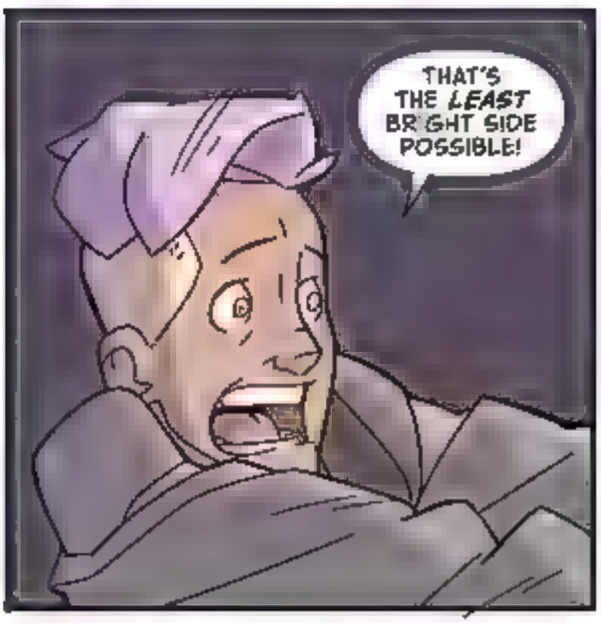

BAIKONUR COSMODROME
SERGEI! IT'S BEEN TOO LONG.
NOT LONG ENOUGH! EVERY TIME WE SPEAK IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD.
IT'S NOT MY FAULT YOU'RE THE BEST THERE IS

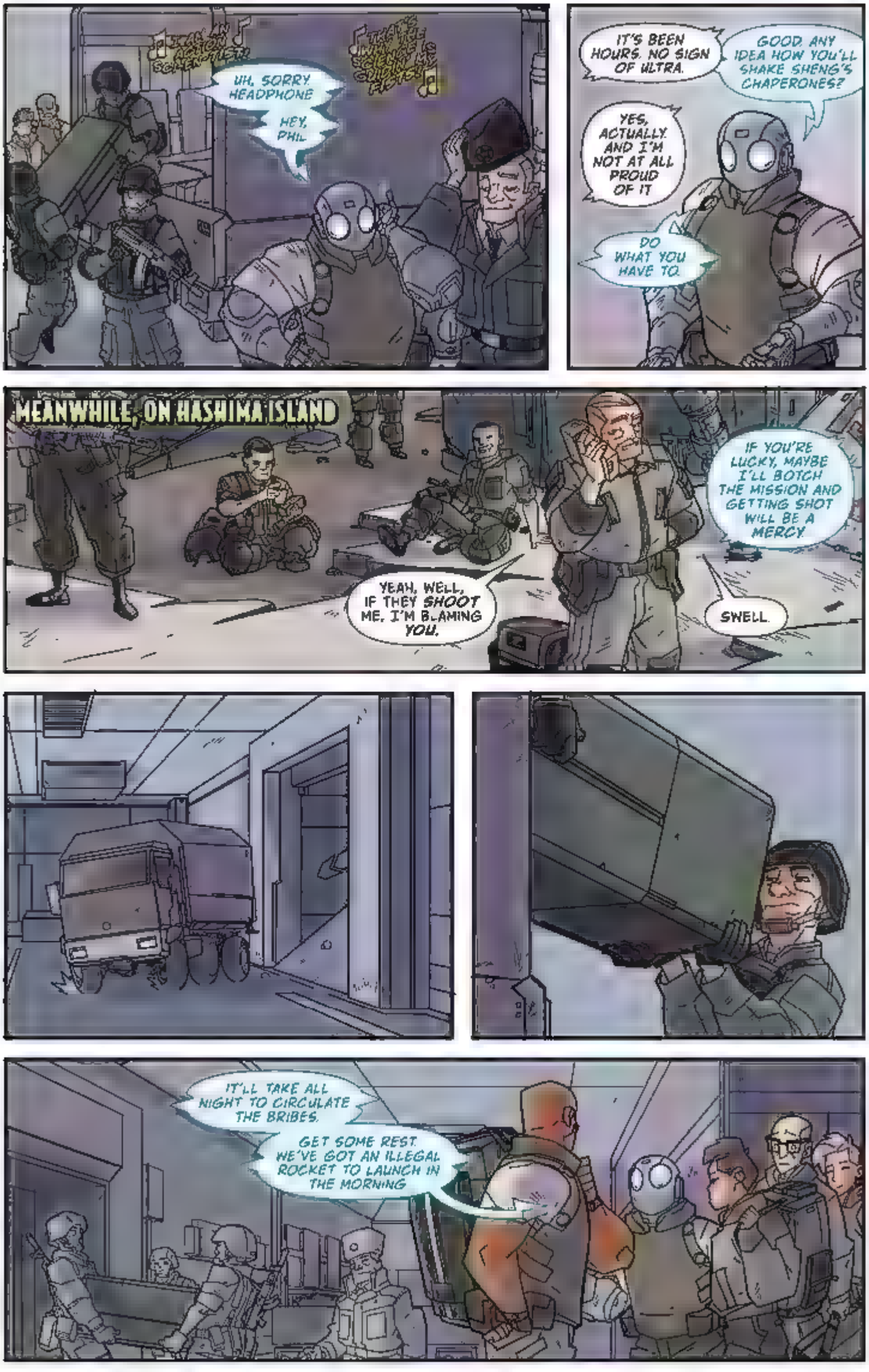

PFAH! FLATTERY! EVEN IF IT IS TRUE IT IS FLATTERY.

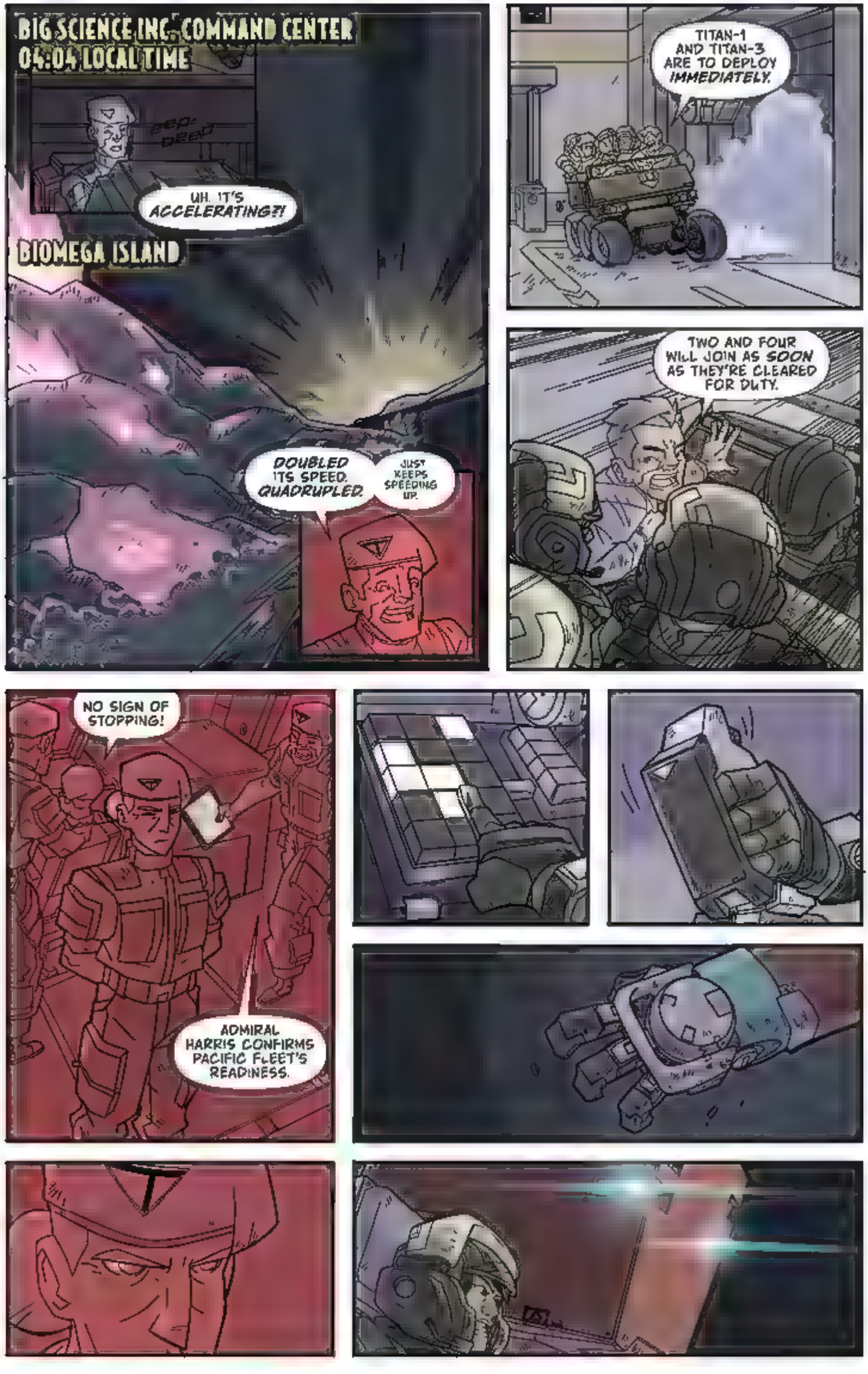

WE BROUGHT THE MONEY.
ROBO, MY DEAR FRIEND! IT IS NOT ABOUT THE MONEY.
HOWEVER. YOUR FAVOR CAN BE DONE NOW.
AND MY PEOPLE?

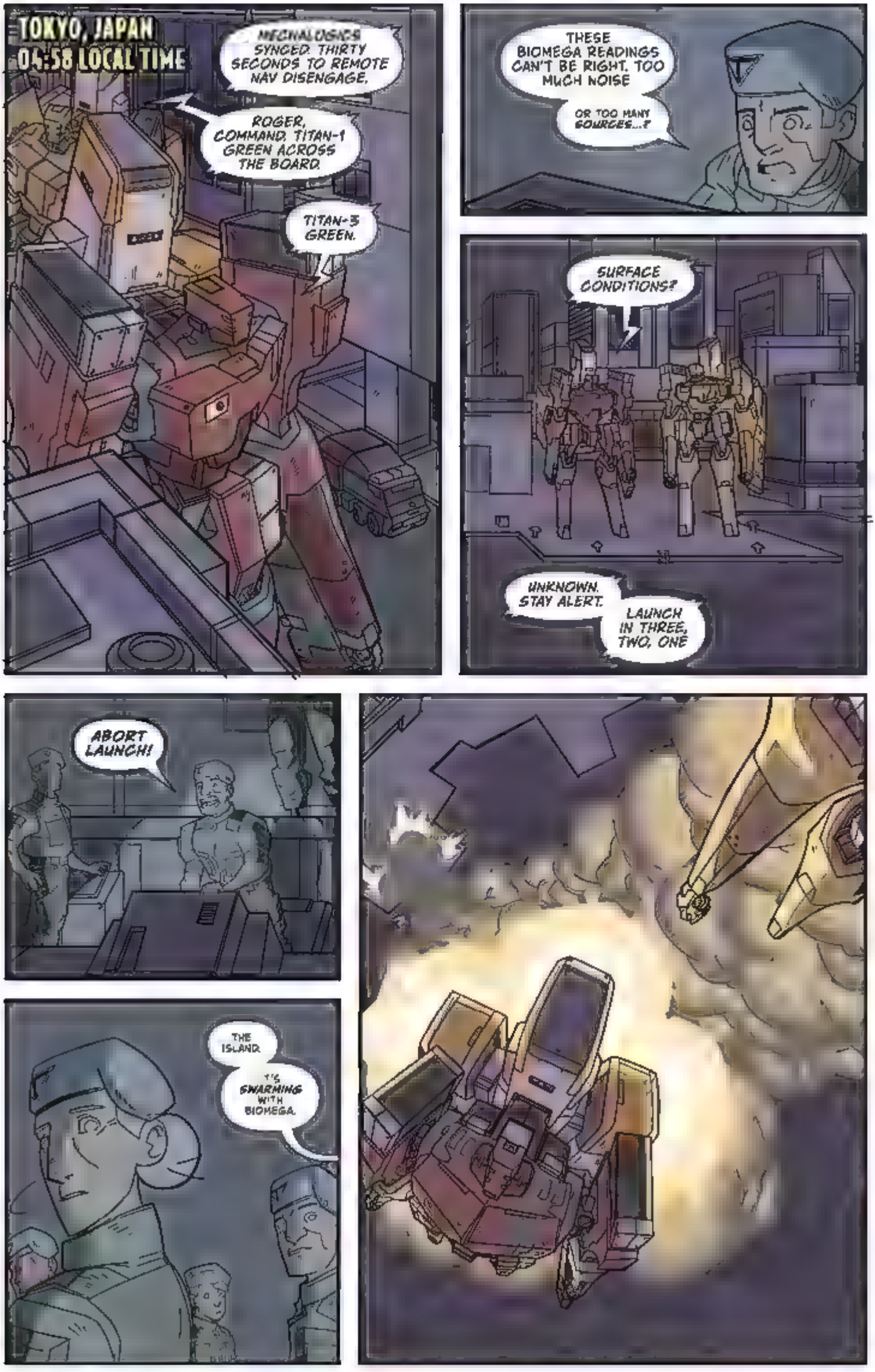
THERE ARE A MILLION SQUARE MILES IN KAZAKHSTAN. NO ONE WILL FIND THEM.
NO, THAT WASN'T OMINOUS.
YEAH, I'M NOT SUPER ENTHUSED ABOUT TRUSTING THIS GUY WITH FIFTY MILLION BUCKS, ROBO, THE FATE OF THE WORLD, AND ALSO OUR LIVES.


UH, ARE WE MOVING HERE? LIKE, FOREVER?
LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE. IF ROBO FAILS, WE WON'T BE HERE LONG.

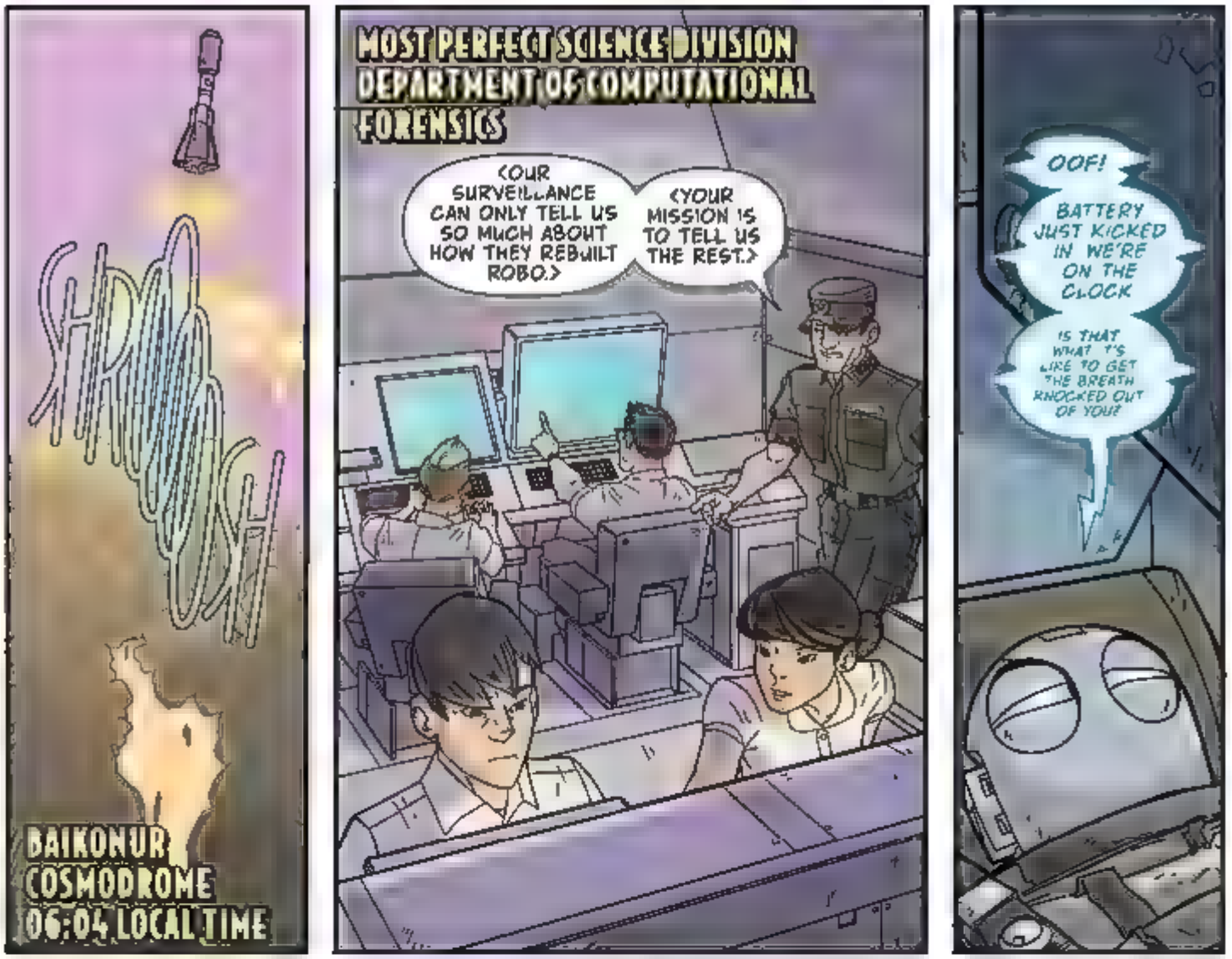

THAT'S THE LEAST BRIGHT SIDE POSSIBLE!

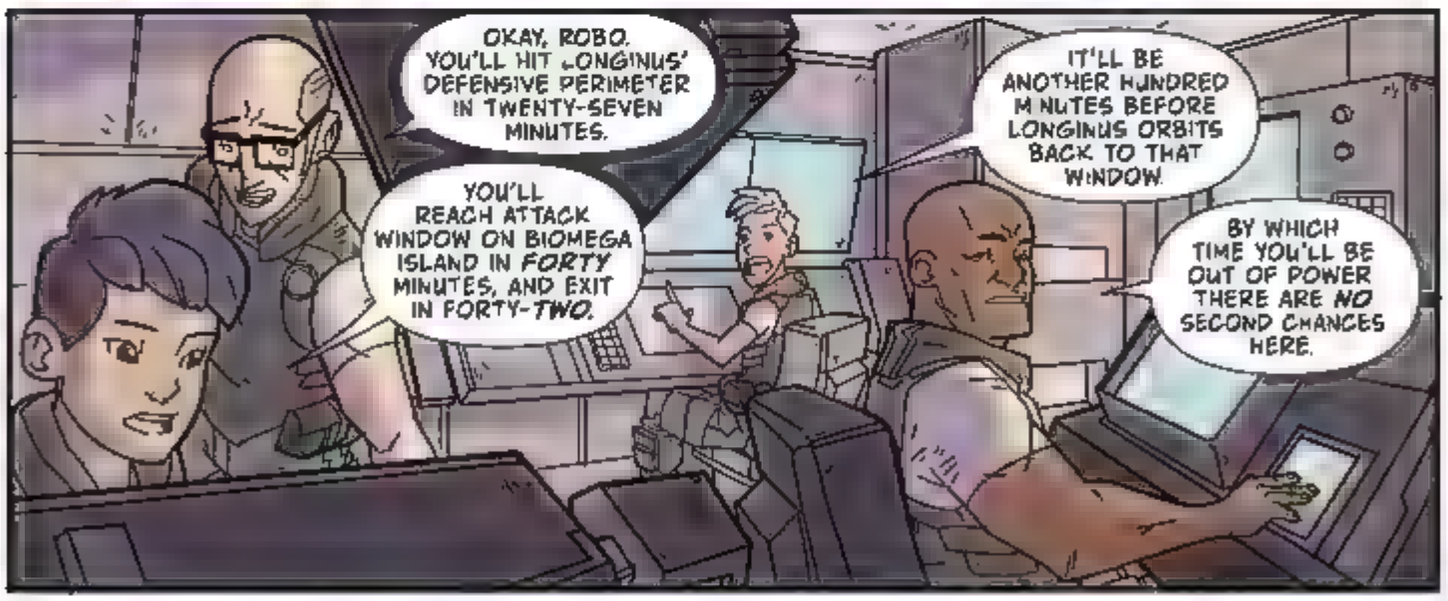

I AM AN ACTION SCIENTIST!
THAT'S THE ULTIMATE SCIENCE GUIDING MY FISTS!
UH, SORRY. HEADPHONE
HEY, PHIL
IT'S BEEN HOURS. NO SIGN OF ULTRA.
GOOD. ANY IDEA HOW YOU'LL SHAKE SHENG'S CHAPERONES?
YES, ACTUALLY. AND I'M NOT AT ALL PROUD OF IT
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO.
MEANWHILE, ON HASHIMA ISLAND
IF YOU'RE LUCKY, MAYBE I'LL BOTCH THE MISSION AND GETTING SHOT WILL BE A MERCY.
YEAH, WELL, IF THEY SHOOT ME, I'M BLAMING YOU.
SWELL.
IT'LL TAKE ALL NIGHT TO CIRCULATE THE BRIBES.
GET SOME REST. WE'VE GOT AN ILLEGAL ROCKET TO LAUNCH IN THE MORNING

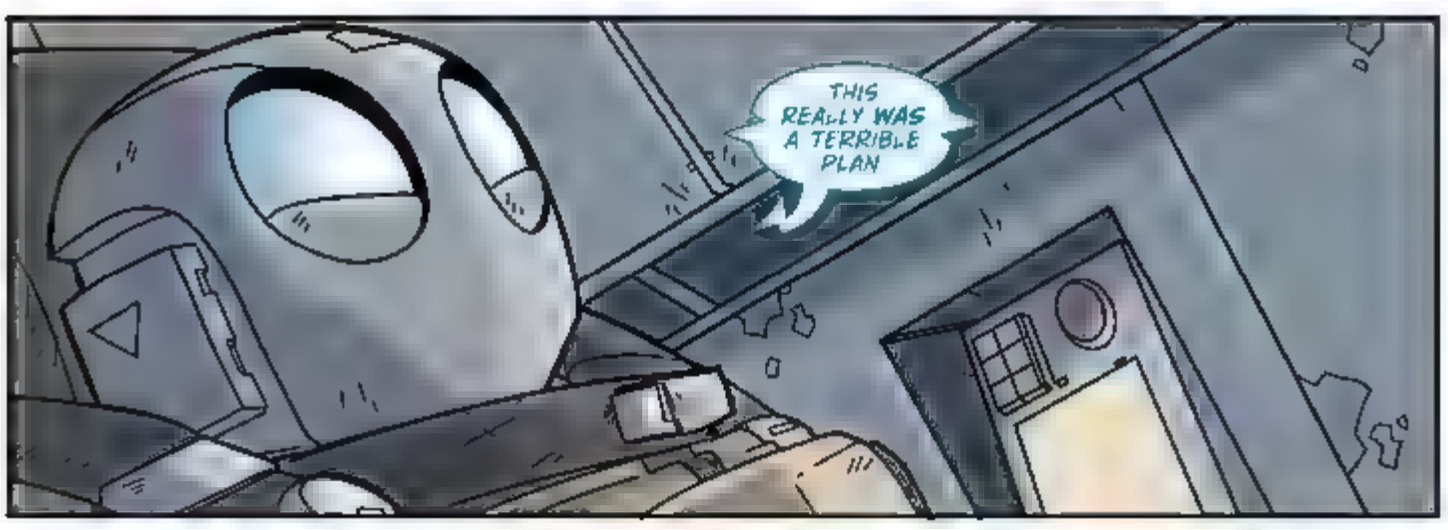

BIG SCIENCE INC. COMMAND CENTER
04:04 LOCAL TIME
BEEP-BEEP
UH. IT'S ACCELERATING?!
BIOMEGA ISLAND
DOUBLED ITS SPEED. QUADRUPLED.
JUST KEEPS SPEEDING UP.
TITAN-1 AND TITAN-3 ARE TO DEPLOY IMMEDIATELY.
TWO AND FOUR WILL JOIN AS SOON AS THEY'RE CLEARED FOR DUTY.
NO SIGN OF STOPPING!
ADMIRAL HARRIS CONFIRMS PACIFIC FLEET'S READINESS.

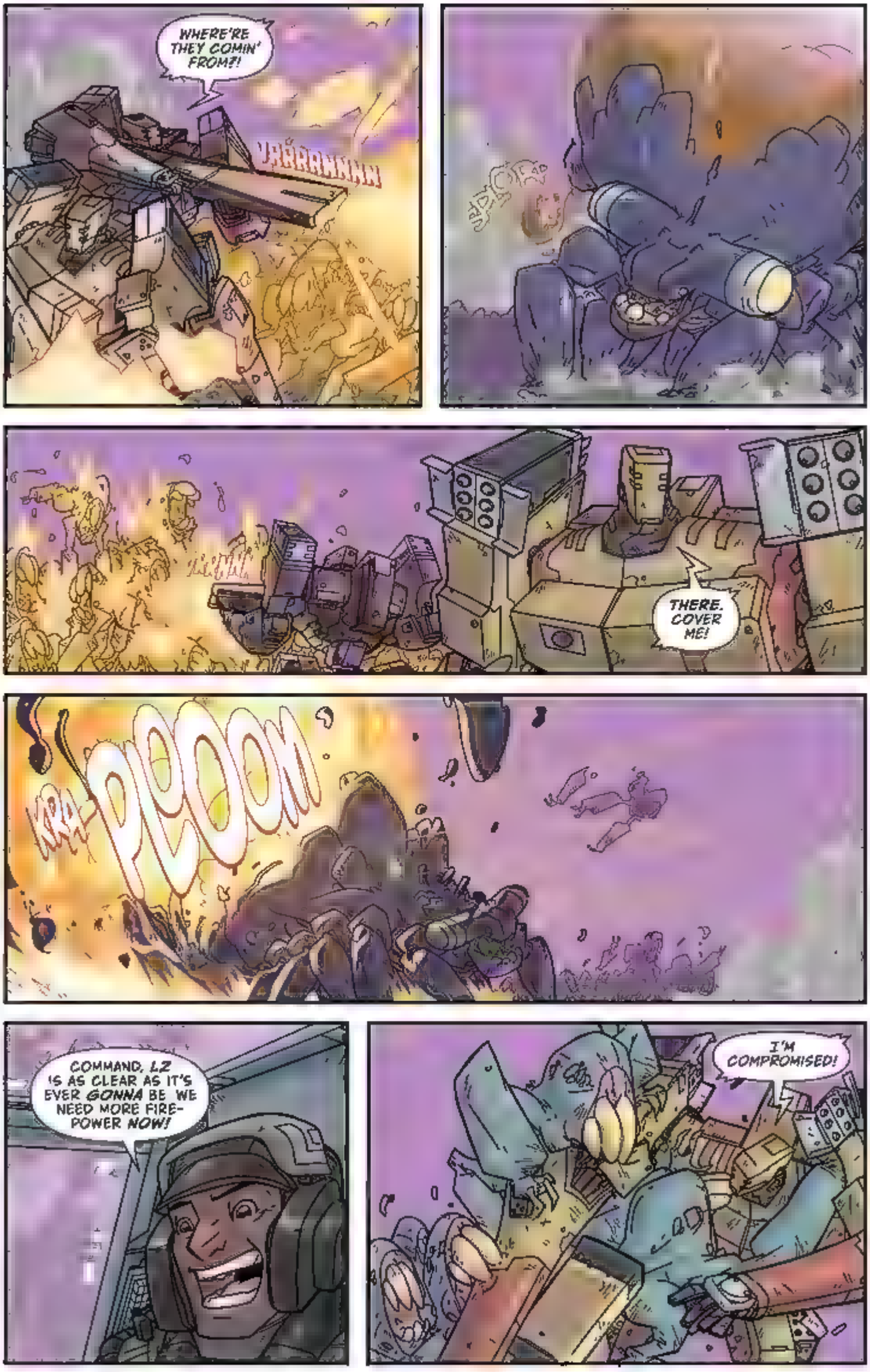

TOKYO, JAPAN
04:58 LOCAL TIME
MECHALOGICS SYNCED. THIRTY SECONDS TO REMOTE NAV DISENGAGE.
ROGER, COMMAND. TITAN-1 GREEN ACROSS THE BOARD.
TITAN-3 GREEN.
THESE BIOMEGA READINGS CAN'T BE RIGHT. TOO MUCH NOISE
OR TOO MANY SOURCES...?
SURFACE CONDITIONS?
UNKNOWN. STAY ALERT.
LAUNCH IN THREE, TWO, ONE
ABORT LAUNCH!
THE ISLAND
IT'S SWARMING WITH BIOMEGA.

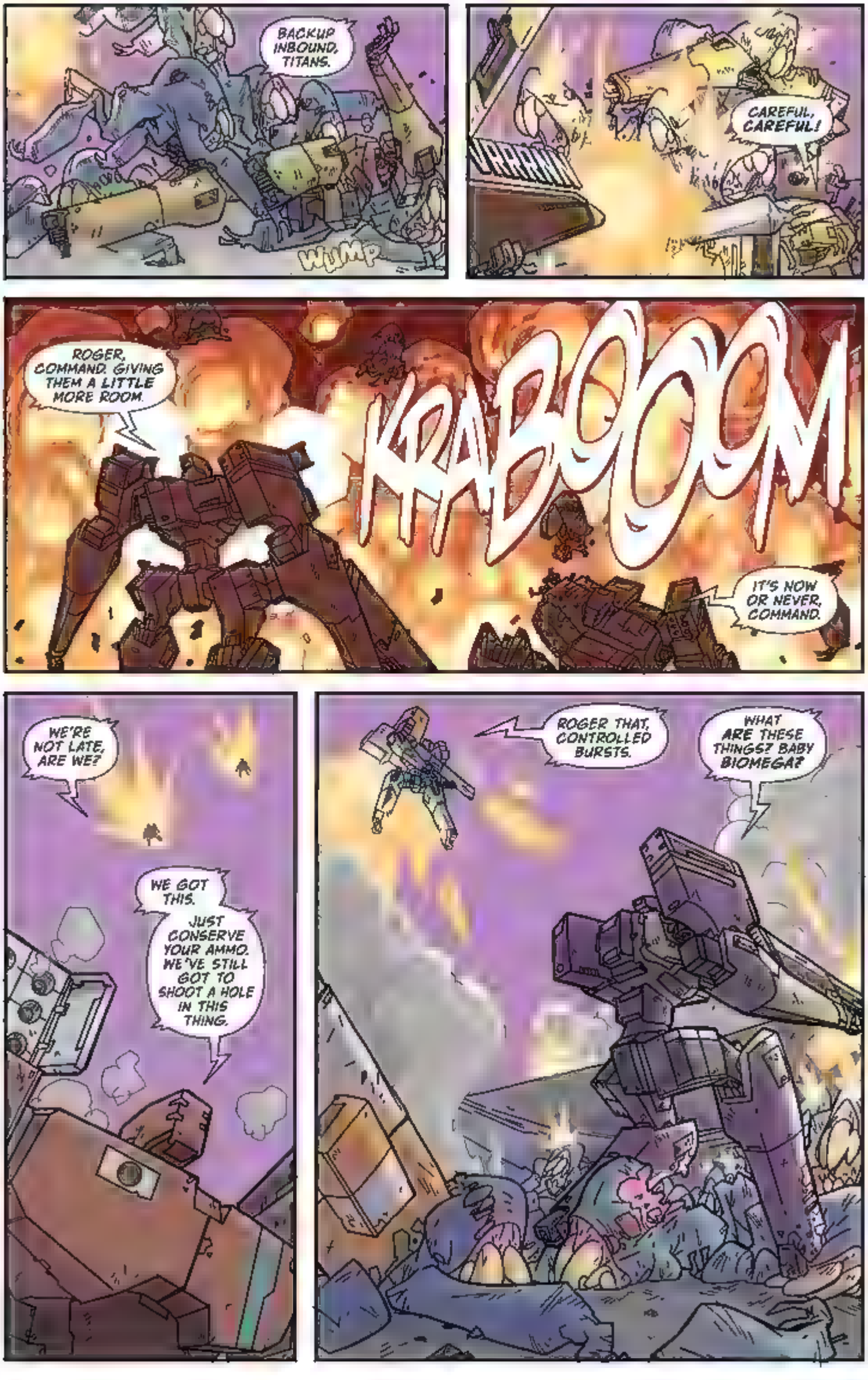
SAY AGAIN?
L-Z IS COMPROMISED. GET A VISUAL. MAXIMUM ZOOM.
HOLY HELL
THEY'LL TEAR US APART!
CLEAR A ZONE TWO AND FOUR WILL BACK YOU UP ASAP.
CRUNCH
BRRRRRRRRRRR


BAIKONUR COSMODROME 06:04 LOCAL TIME
MOST PERFECT SCIENCE DIVISION DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTATIONAL FORENSICS
<OUR SURVEILLANCE CAN ONLY TELL US SO MUCH ABOUT HOW THEY REBUILT ROBO.>
<YOUR MISSION IS TO TELL US THE REST.>
OOF!
BATTERY JUST KICKED IN WE'RE ON THE CLOCK
IS THAT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO GET THE BREATH KNOCKED OUT OF YOU?

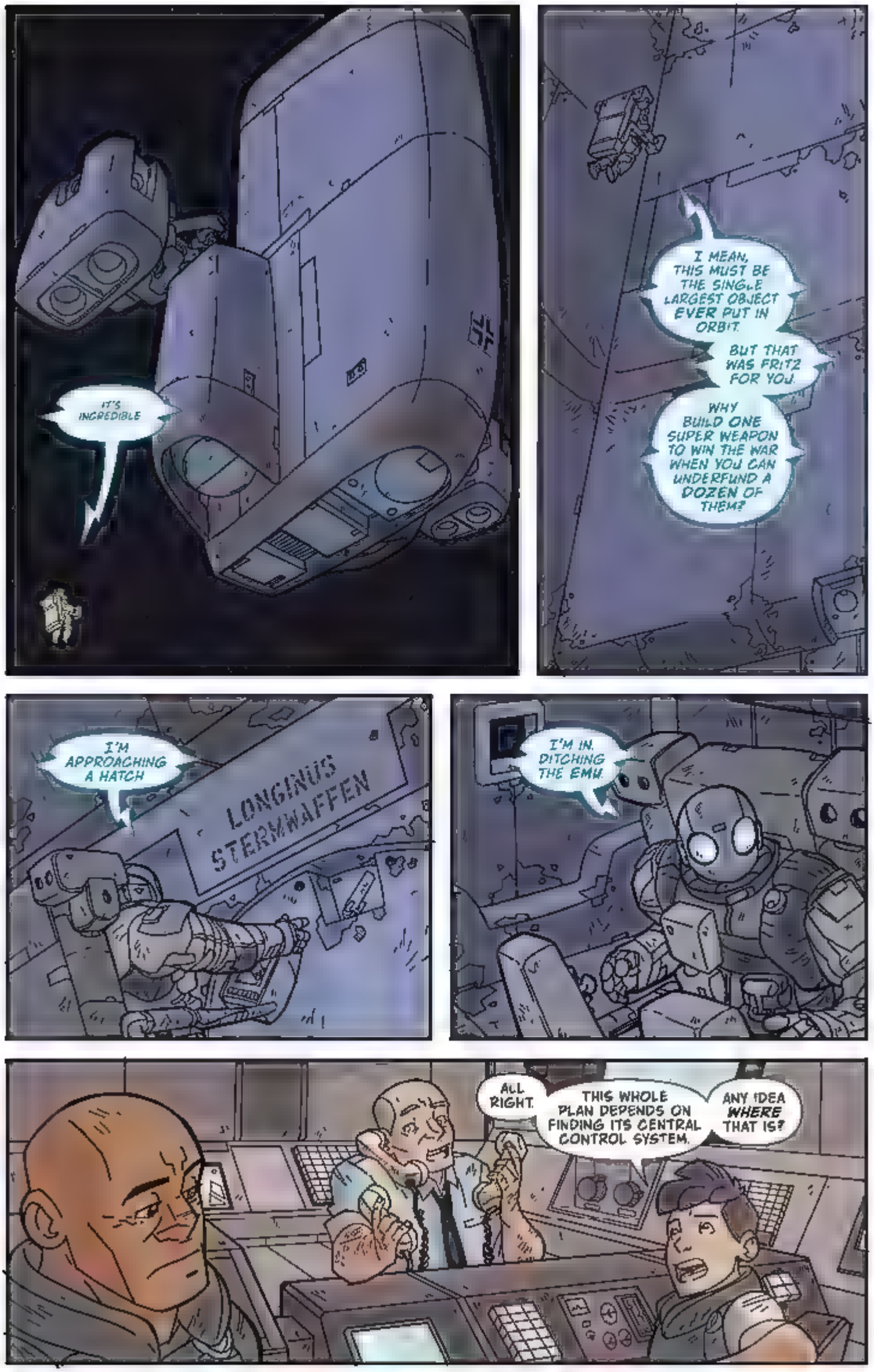

OKAY, ROBO. YOU'LL HIT LONGINUS' DEFENSIVE PERIMETER IN TWENTY-SEVEN MINUTES.
YOU'LL REACH ATTACK WINDOW ON BIOMEGA ISLAND IN *FORTY* MINUTES, AND EXIT IN FORTY-*TWO*.
IT'LL BE ANOTHER HUNDRED MINUTES BEFORE LONGINUS ORBITS BACK TO THAT WINDOW.
BY WHICH TIME YOU'LL BE OUT OF POWER THERE ARE *NO* SECOND CHANCES HERE.

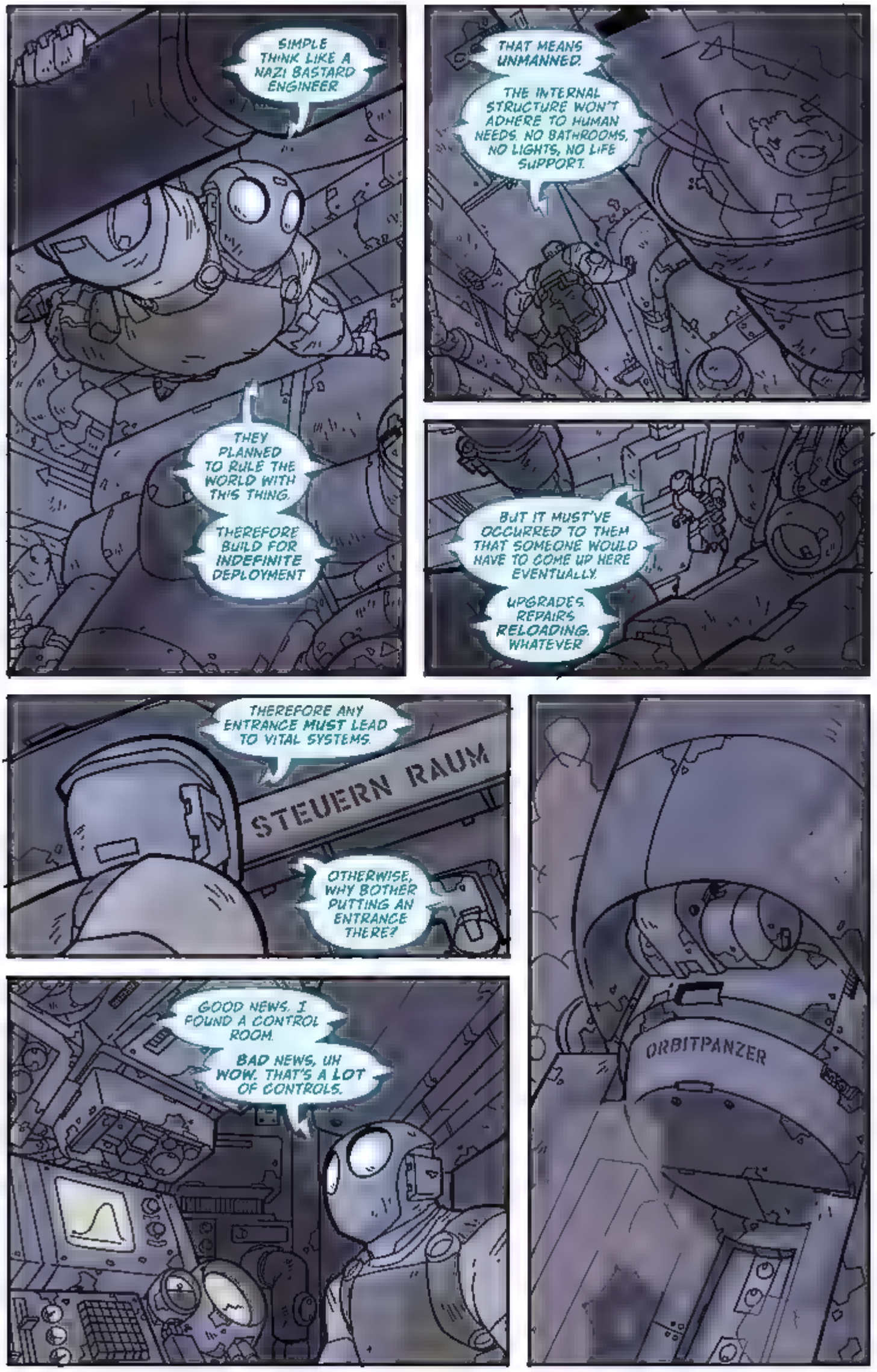

THIS REALLY *WAS* A TERRIBLE PLAN


WHERE'RE THEY COMIN' FROM?!
BRRRAMMM
THERE. COVER ME!
KRA-PLOOM
COMMAND, LZ IS AS CLEAR AS IT'S EVER GONNA BE. WE NEED MORE FIRE-POWER NOW!
I'M COMPROMISED!


BACKUP INBOUND, TITANS.
WHMP
CAREFUL, CAREFUL!
ROGER, COMMAND. GIVING THEM A LITTLE MORE ROOM.
KABOOM
IT'S NOW OR NEVER, COMMAND.
WE'RE NOT LATE, ARE WE?
WE GOT THIS.
JUST CONSERVE YOUR AMMO. WE'VE STILL GOT TO SHOOT A HOLE IN THIS THING.
ROGER THAT, CONTROLLED BURSTS.
WHAT ARE THESE THINGS? BABY BIOMEGA?

KONK
UH
I THINK WE HIT SOMETHING.
NO CHANGE IN YOUR FLIGHTPATH.
YOU'RE APPROACHING THE PERIMETER OF THE EMPTY "BUBBLE" AROUND LONGINUS. DEBRIS MAYBE?
MADE IT THROUGH THE DEFENSES.
TECHNICALLY.
I'VE GOT A VISUAL MAKING MY APPROACH.


IT'S INCREDIBLE
I MEAN, THIS MUST BE THE SINGLE LARGEST OBJECT EVER PUT IN ORBIT.
BUT THAT WAS FRITZ FOR YOU.
WHY BUILD ONE SUPER WEAPON TO WIN THE WAR WHEN YOU CAN UNDERFUND A DOZEN OF THEM?
I'M APPROACHING A HATCH
LONGINUS STERNWAFFEN
I'M IN. DITCHING THE EMU.
ALL RIGHT.
THIS WHOLE PLAN DEPENDS ON FINDING ITS CENTRAL CONTROL SYSTEM.
ANY IDEA WHERE THAT IS?

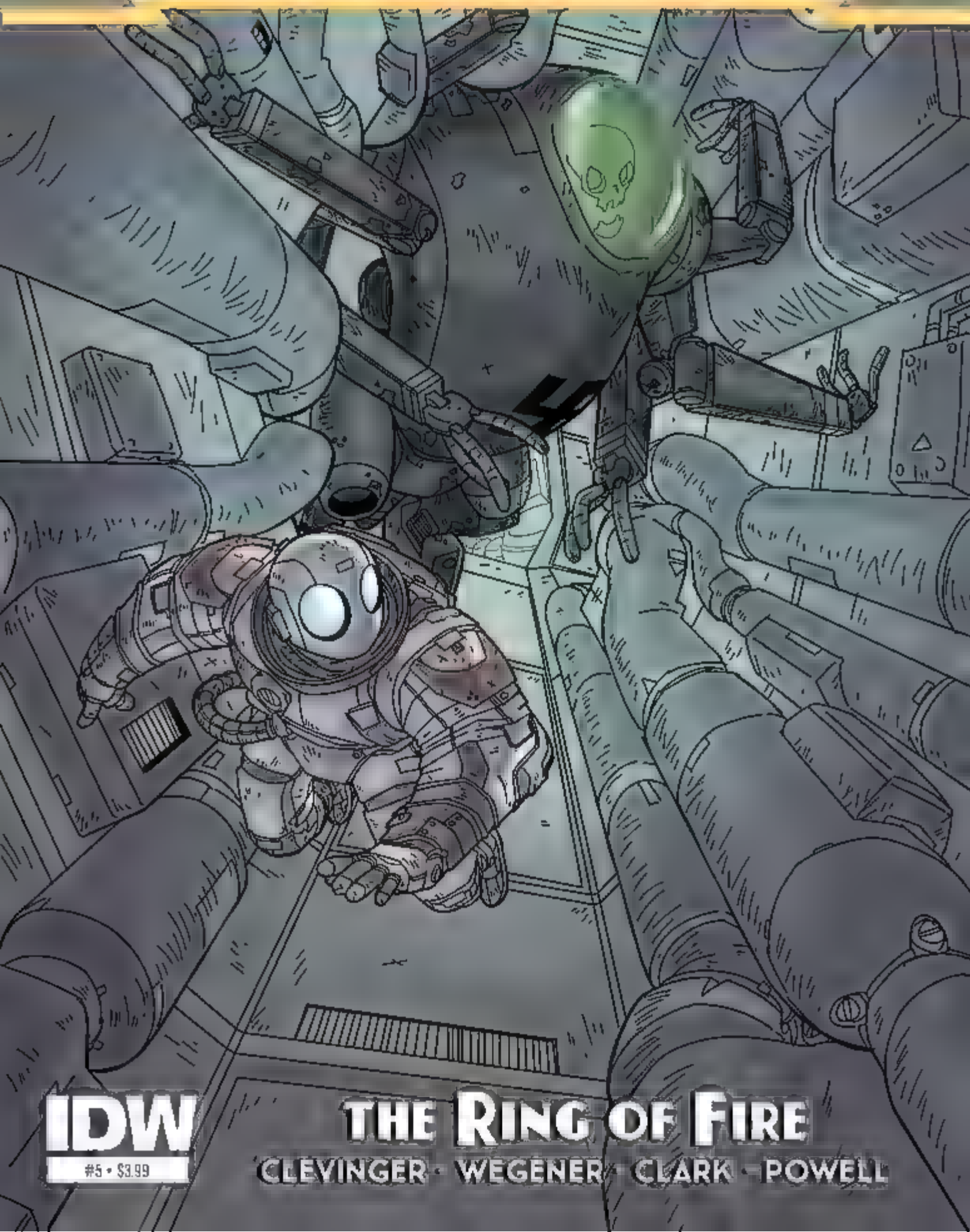

SIMPLE THINK LIKE A NAZI BASTARD ENGINEER
THEY PLANNED TO RULE THE WORLD WITH THIS THING.
THEREFORE BUILD FOR INDEFINITE DEPLOYMENT
THAT MEANS UNMANNED.
THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE WON'T ADHERE TO HUMAN NEEDS. NO BATHROOMS, NO LIGHTS, NO LIFE SUPPORT.
BUT IT MUST'VE OCCURRED TO THEM THAT SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TO COME UP HERE EVENTUALLY.
UPGRADES. REPAIRS. RELOADING. WHATEVER
THEREFORE ANY ENTRANCE MUST LEAD TO VITAL SYSTEMS.
STEUERN RAUM
OTHERWISE, WHY BOTHER PUTTING AN ENTRANCE THERE?
GOOD NEWS. I FOUND A CONTROL ROOM.
BAD NEWS, UH WOW. THAT'S A LOT OF CONTROLS.
ORBITPANZER

HASHIMA ISLAND
OKAY.
I'VE EXPER MENTALLY DETERM NED YOU GUYS DON'T UNDER-STAND A WORD I'M SAY NG.
SO NOW I'M USING A STERN AND CAUTIOUS TONE
AND NOW I'M WHISPERING BECAUSE--OH NO-- T S SO SERIOUS.
MAYBE I SHOULD TURN THIS THING ON?
x1
x10
x100
OFF
OH, GOODNESS WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE!
I'M YELLING NOW! IT'S TOTALLY SERIOUS!
WE'RE BEING EXPOSED TO A NORMAL AND HARMLESS BACKGROUND LEVEL OF THE DEADLY RADIATIONS!
SAVE YOURSELVES!
FWUMP

TEN MISSISSIPPI.
ELEVEN MISSISSIPPI.
'BOUT TIME I GOT TO PUT RADIOACTIVITY IGNORANCE TO GOOD USE.
KNOCK, KNOCK, ALAN.

ULTRA
ALAN
SERIOUSLY THE *WORST* PLAN
TO BE CONCLUDED

ATOMIC ROBO



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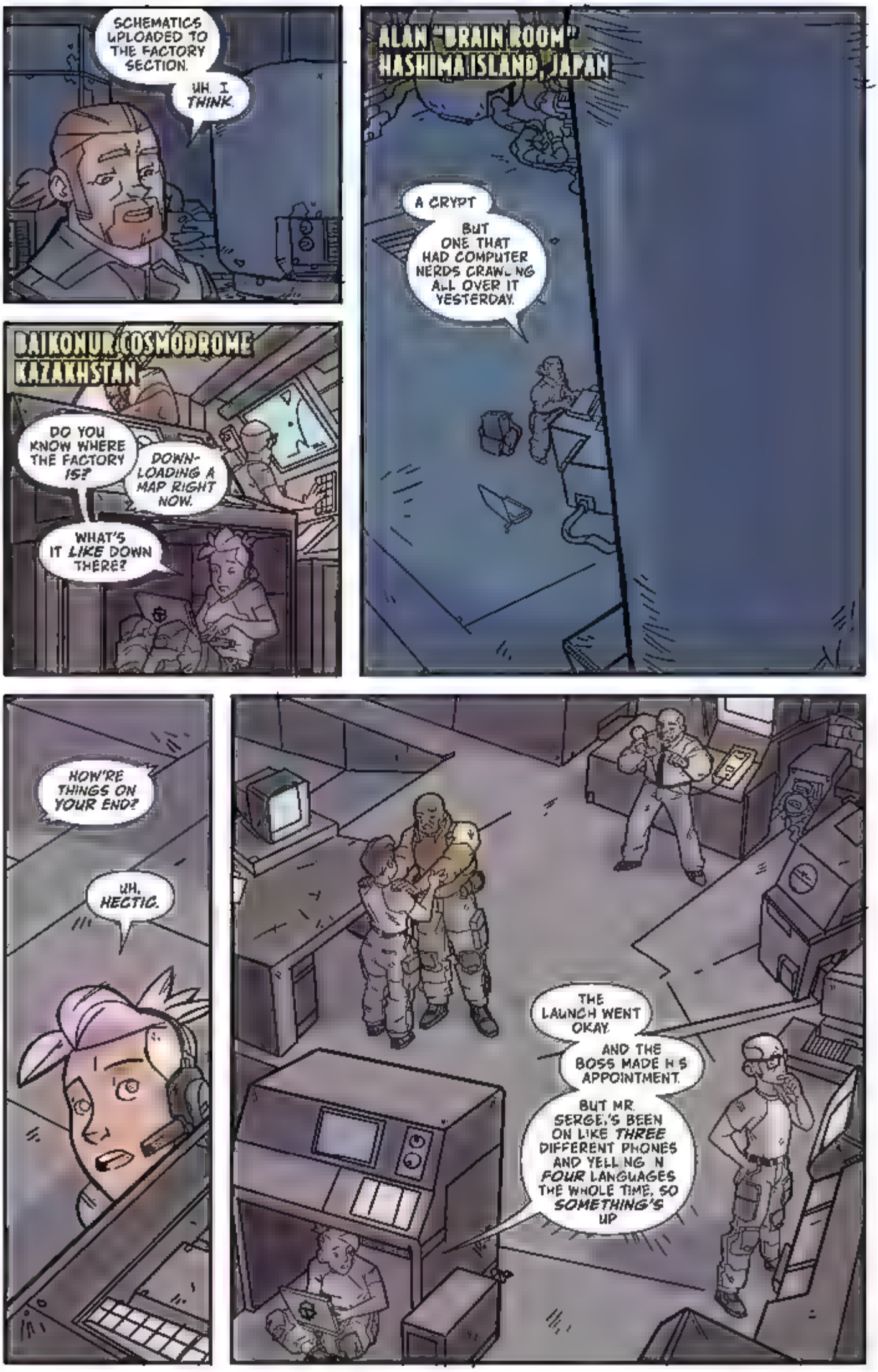
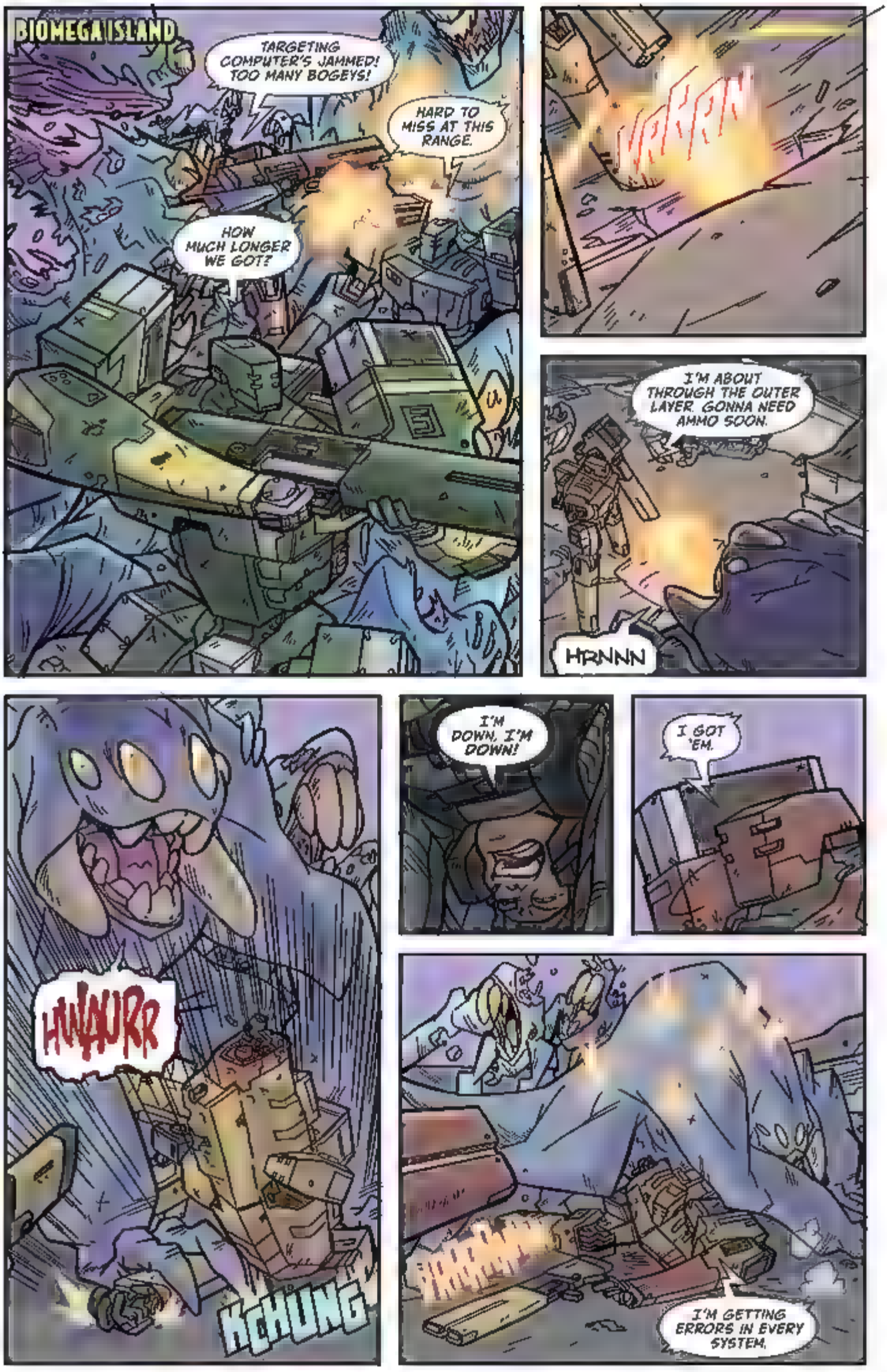
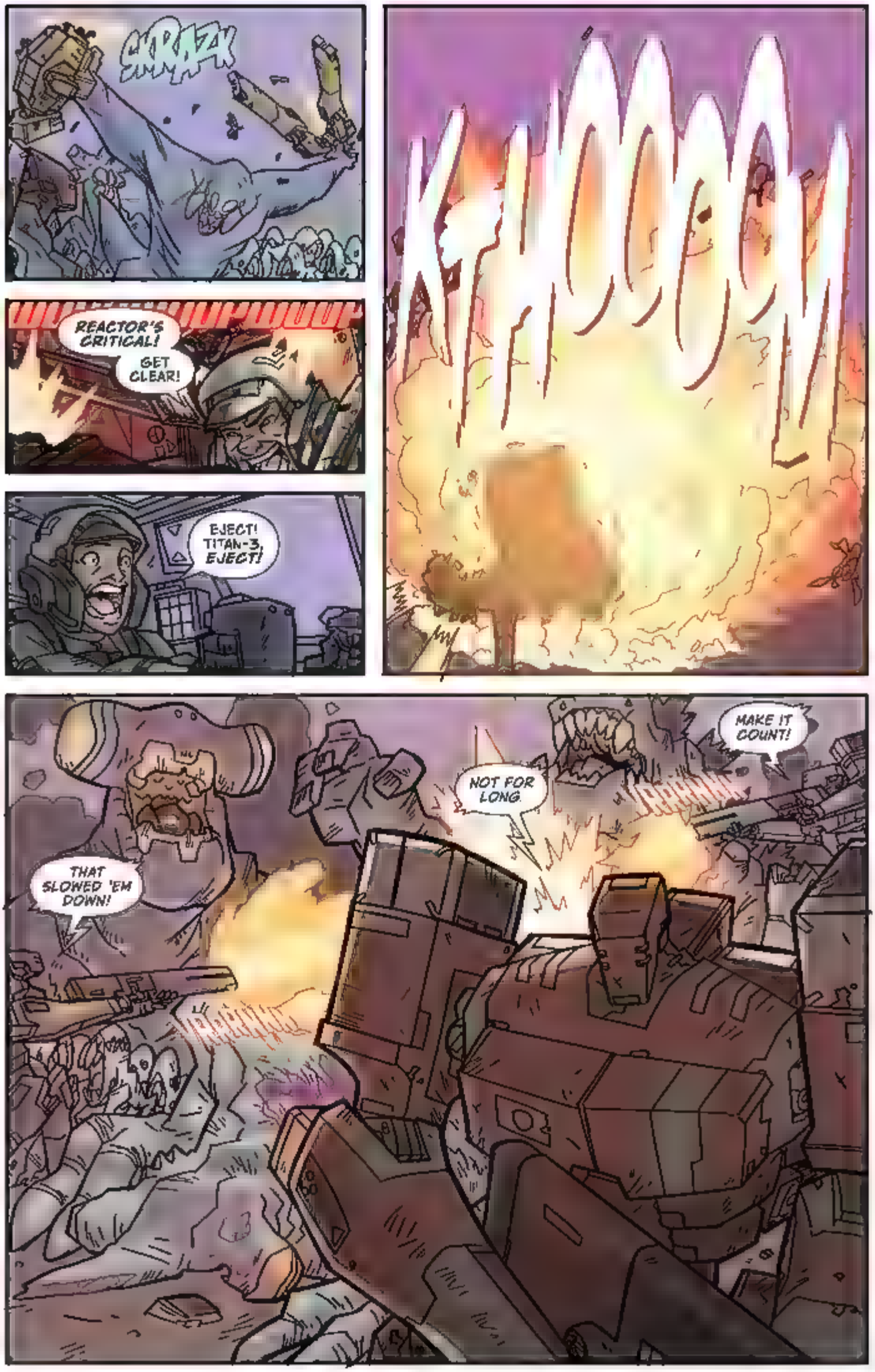
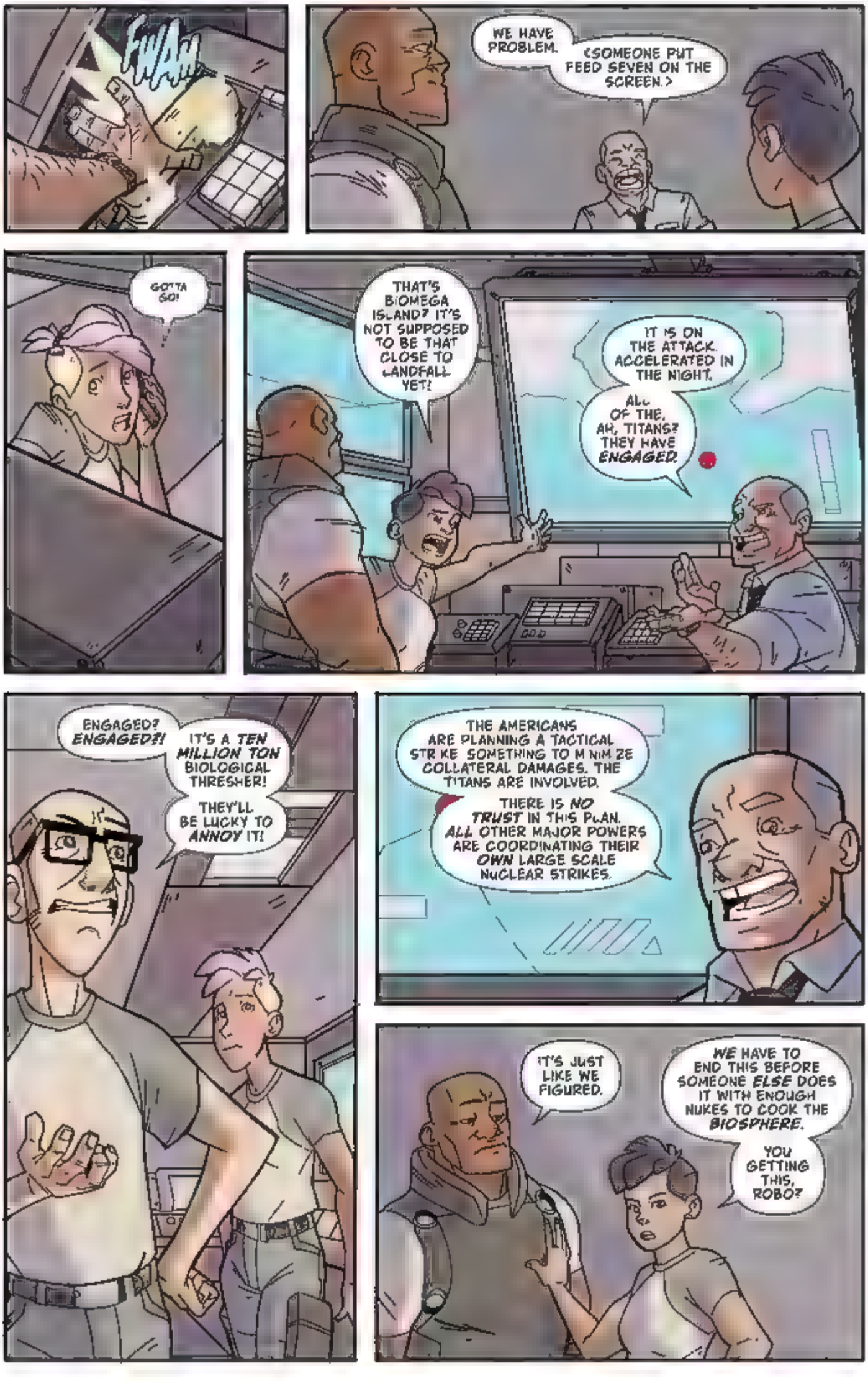
THE RING OF FIRE

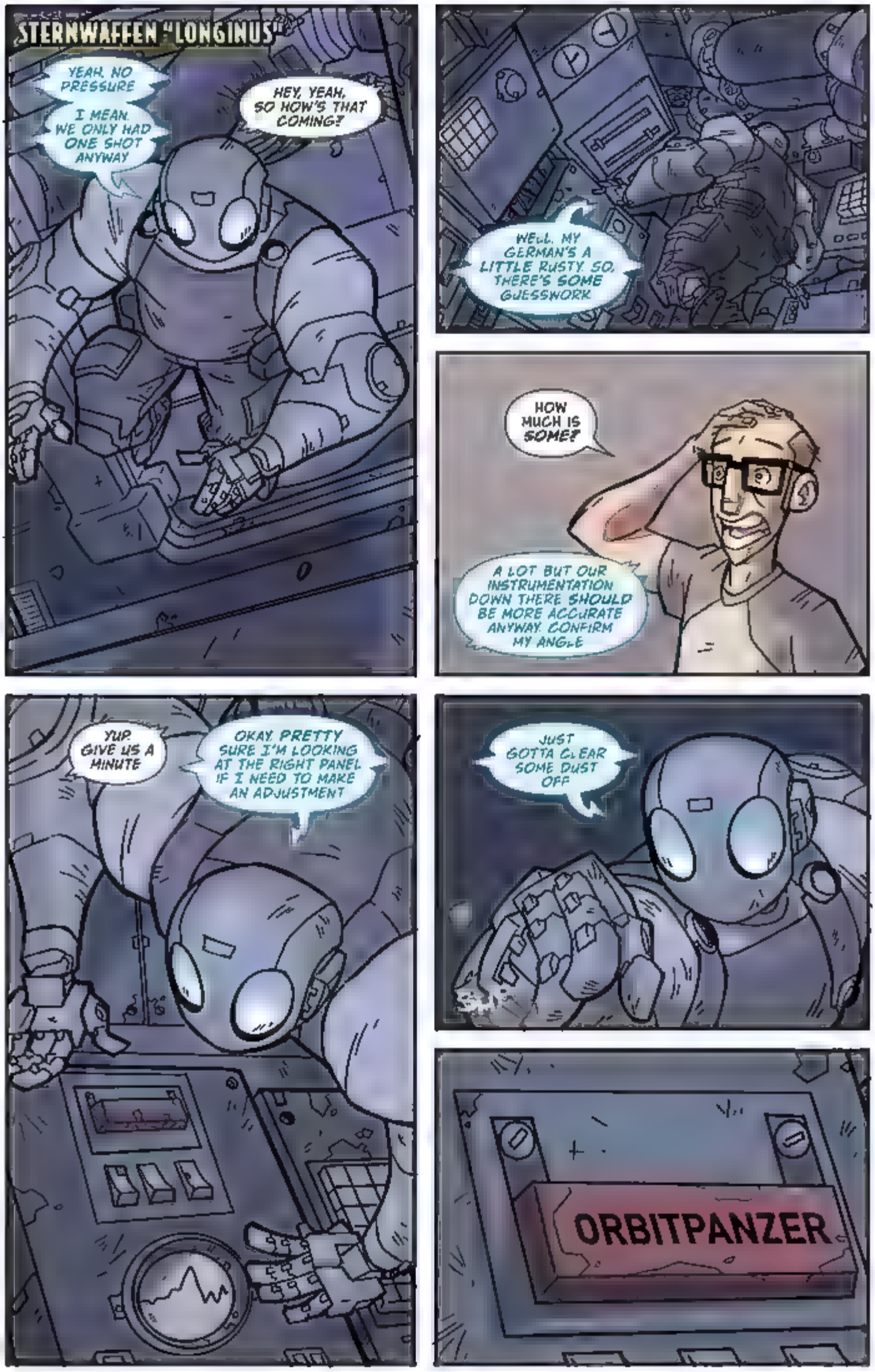
CLEVINGER · WEGENER · CLARK · POWELL

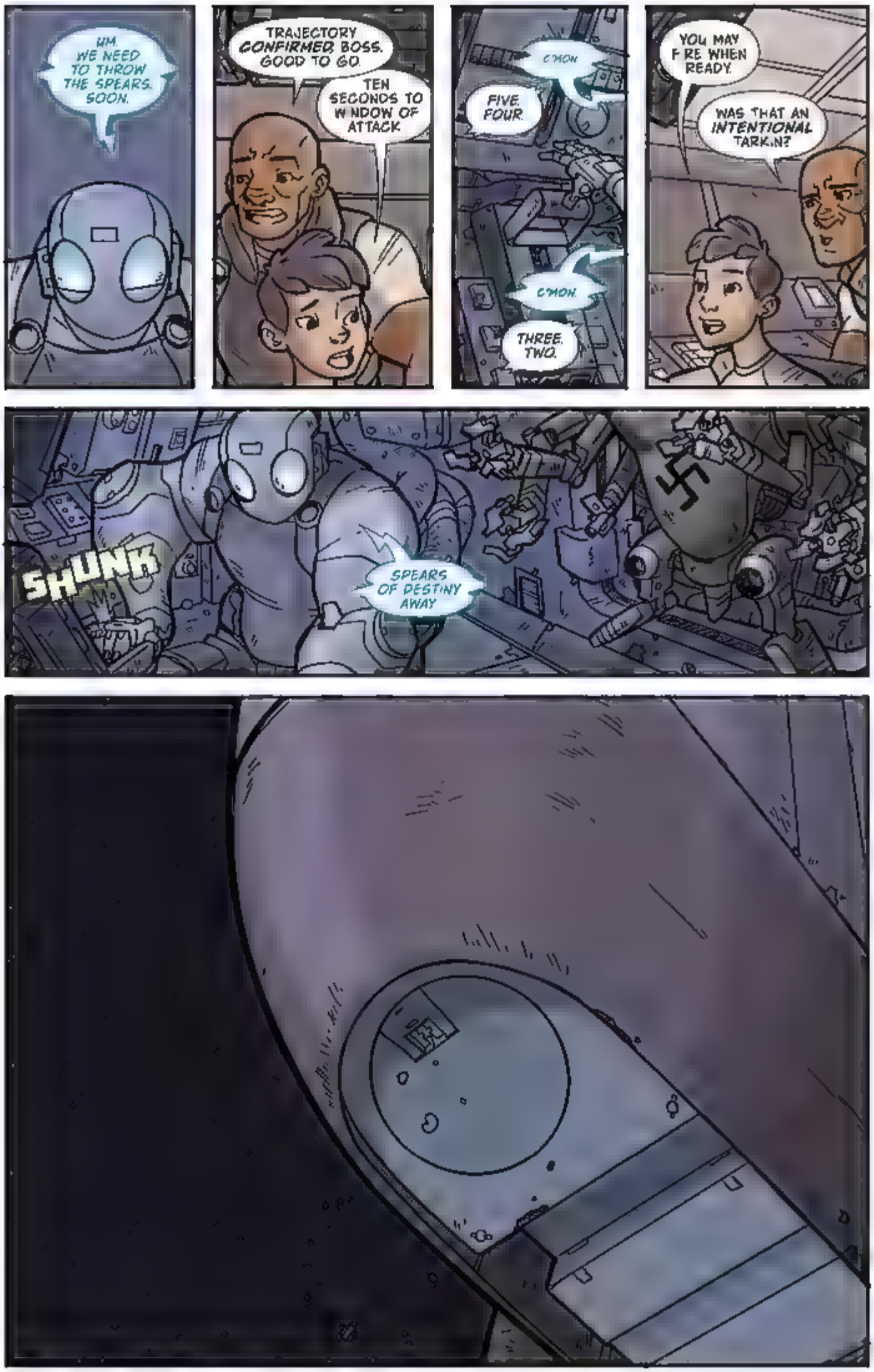

SCHEMATICS UPLOADED TO THE FACTORY SECTION.
UH. I THINK.
ALAN "BRAIN ROOM" HASHIMA ISLAND, JAPAN
A CRYPT
BUT ONE THAT HAD COMPUTER NERDS CRAWLING ALL OVER IT YESTERDAY.
BAIKONUR COSMODROME KAZAKHSTAN
DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE FACTORY IS?
DOWN-LOADING A MAP RIGHT NOW.
WHAT'S IT LIKE DOWN THERE?
HOW'RE THINGS ON YOUR END?
UH. HECTIC.
THE LAUNCH WENT OKAY.
AND THE BOSS MADE HIS APPOINTMENT.
BUT MR. SERGE'S BEEN ON LIKE THREE DIFFERENT PHONES AND YELLING IN FOUR LANGUAGES THE WHOLE TIME, SO SOMETHING'S UP

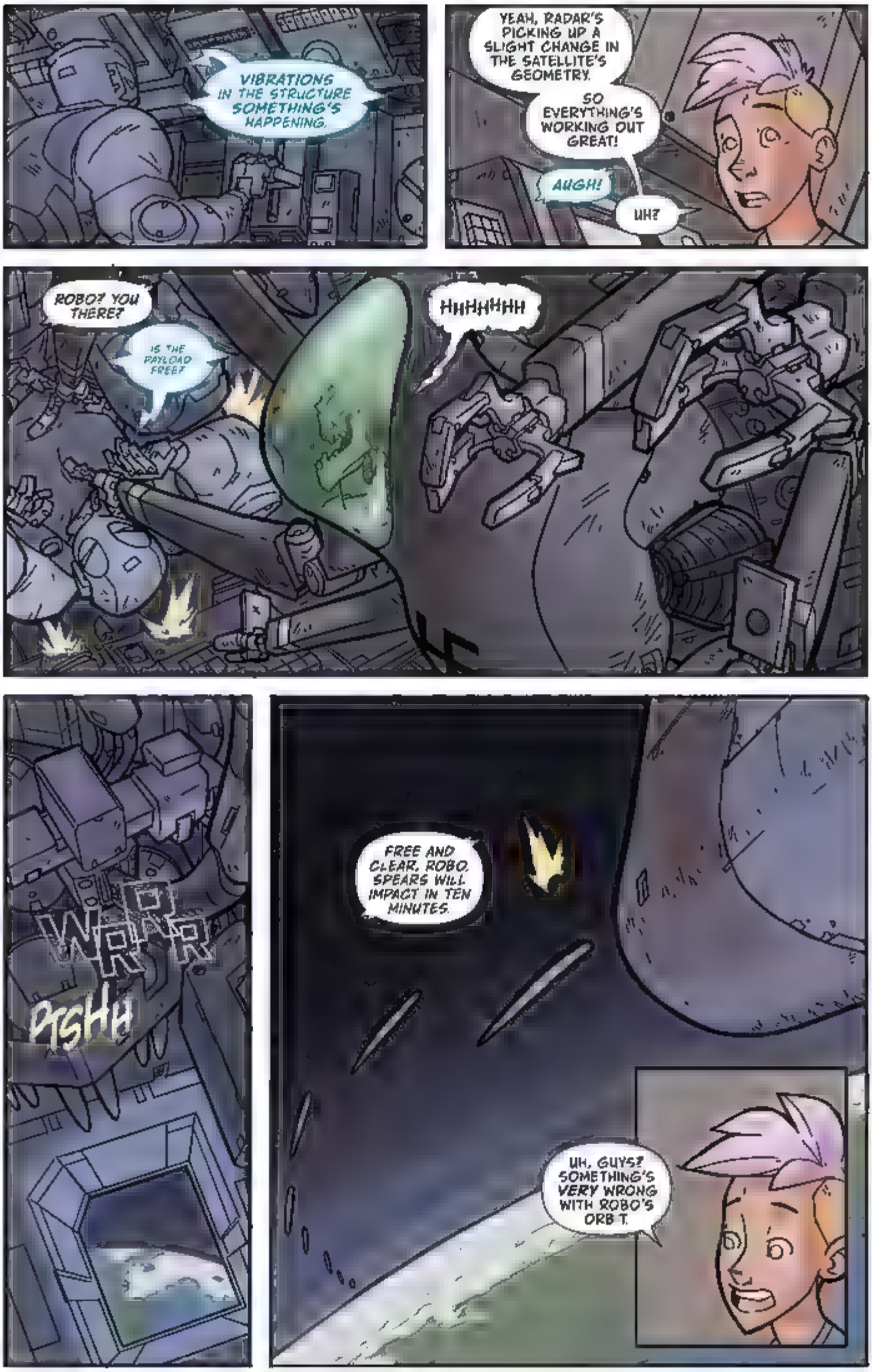

BIOMEGA ISLAND
TARGETING COMPUTER'S JAMMED! TOO MANY BOGEYS!
HARD TO MISS AT THIS RANGE.
HOW MUCH LONGER WE GOT?
VRKRN
I'M ABOUT THROUGH THE OUTER LAYER. GONNA NEED AMMO SOON.
HRNNN
HWAURR
KCHUNG
I'M DOWN, I'M DOWN!
I GOT 'EM.
I'M GETTING ERRORS IN EVERY SYSTEM.

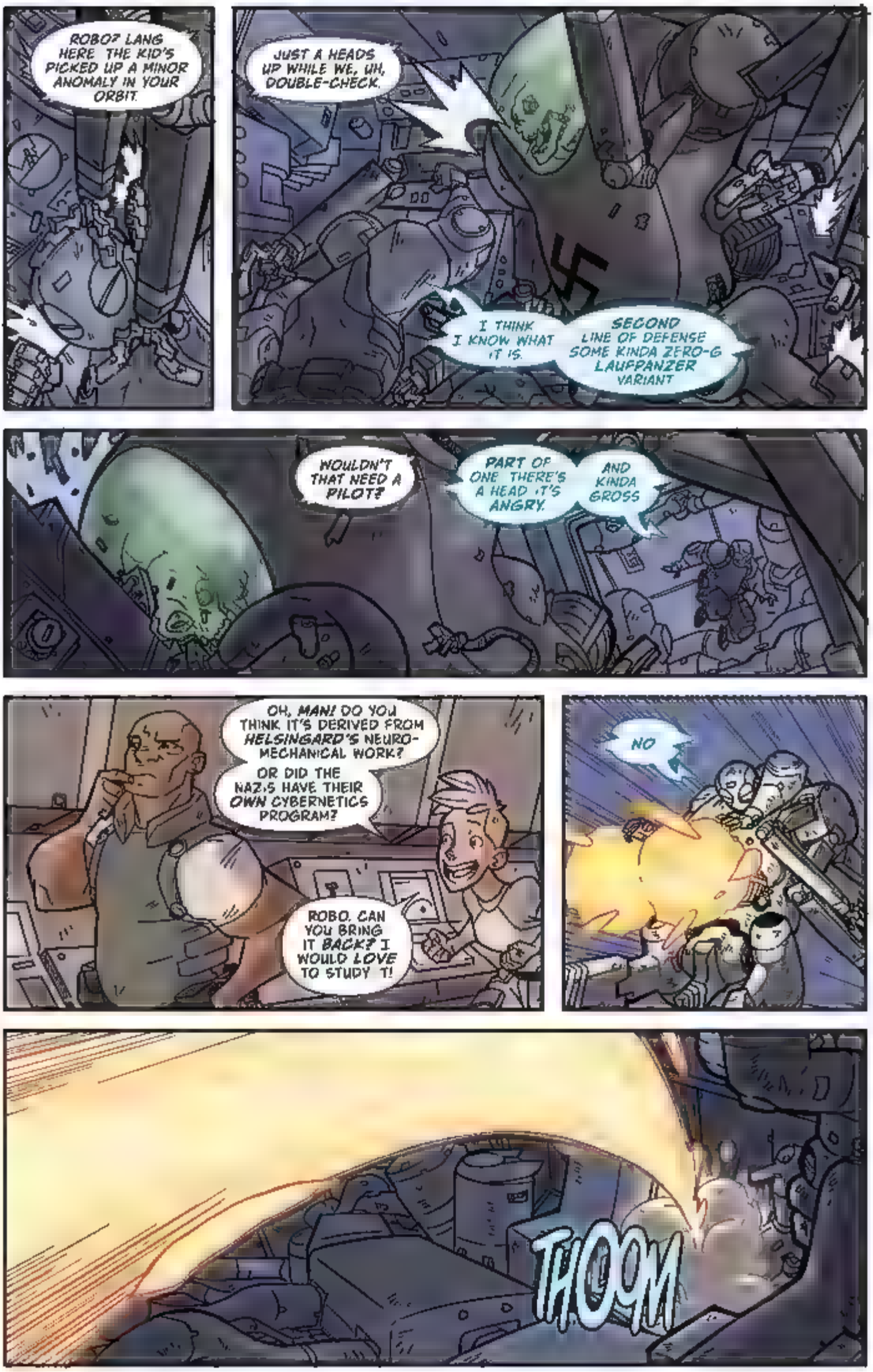

SKRRZZK
REACTOR'S CRITICAL!
GET CLEAR!
EJECT! TITAN-3, EJECT!
KABOOM
THAT SLOWED 'EM DOWN!
NOT FOR LONG.
MAKE IT COUNT!

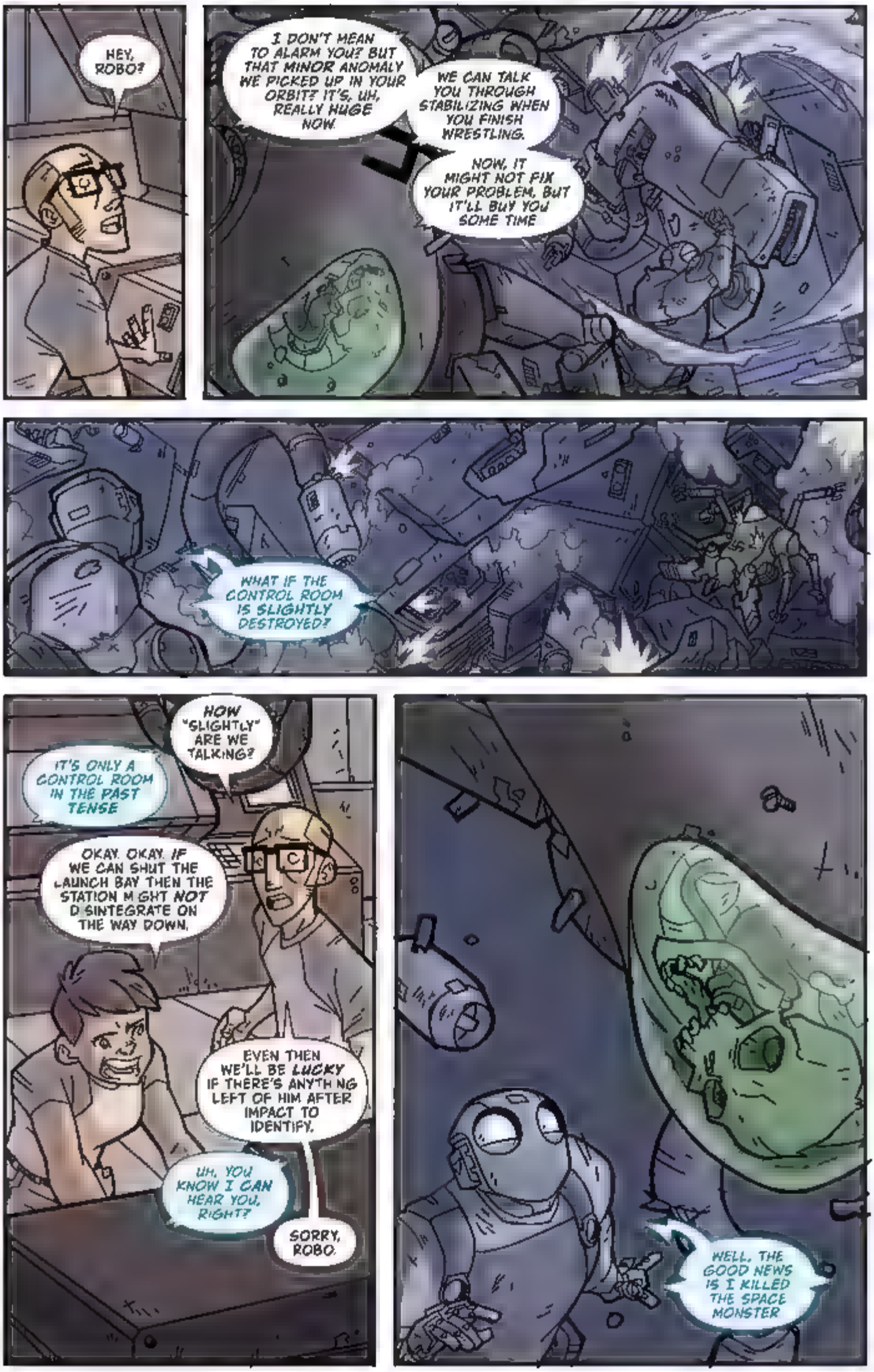

FWAH
WE HAVE PROBLEM.
<SOMEONE PUT FEED SEVEN ON THE SCREEN.>
GOTTA GO!
THAT'S BIOMEGA ISLAND? IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THAT CLOSE TO LANDFALL YET!
IT IS ON THE ATTACK. ACCELERATED IN THE NIGHT.
ALL OF THE, AH, TITANS? THEY HAVE ENGAGED.
ENGAGED? ENGAGED?!
IT'S A TEN MILLION TON BIOLOGICAL THRESHER!
THEY'LL BE LUCKY TO ANNOY IT!
THE AMERICANS ARE PLANNING A TACTICAL STRIKE SOMETHING TO MINIMIZE COLLATERAL DAMAGES. THE TITANS ARE INVOLVED.
THERE IS NO TRUST IN THIS PLAN. ALL OTHER MAJOR POWERS ARE COORDINATING THEIR OWN LARGE SCALE NUCLEAR STRIKES.
IT'S JUST LIKE WE FIGURED.
WE HAVE TO END THIS BEFORE SOMEONE ELSE DOES IT WITH ENOUGH NUKES TO COOK THE BIOSPHERE.
YOU GETTING THIS, ROBO?

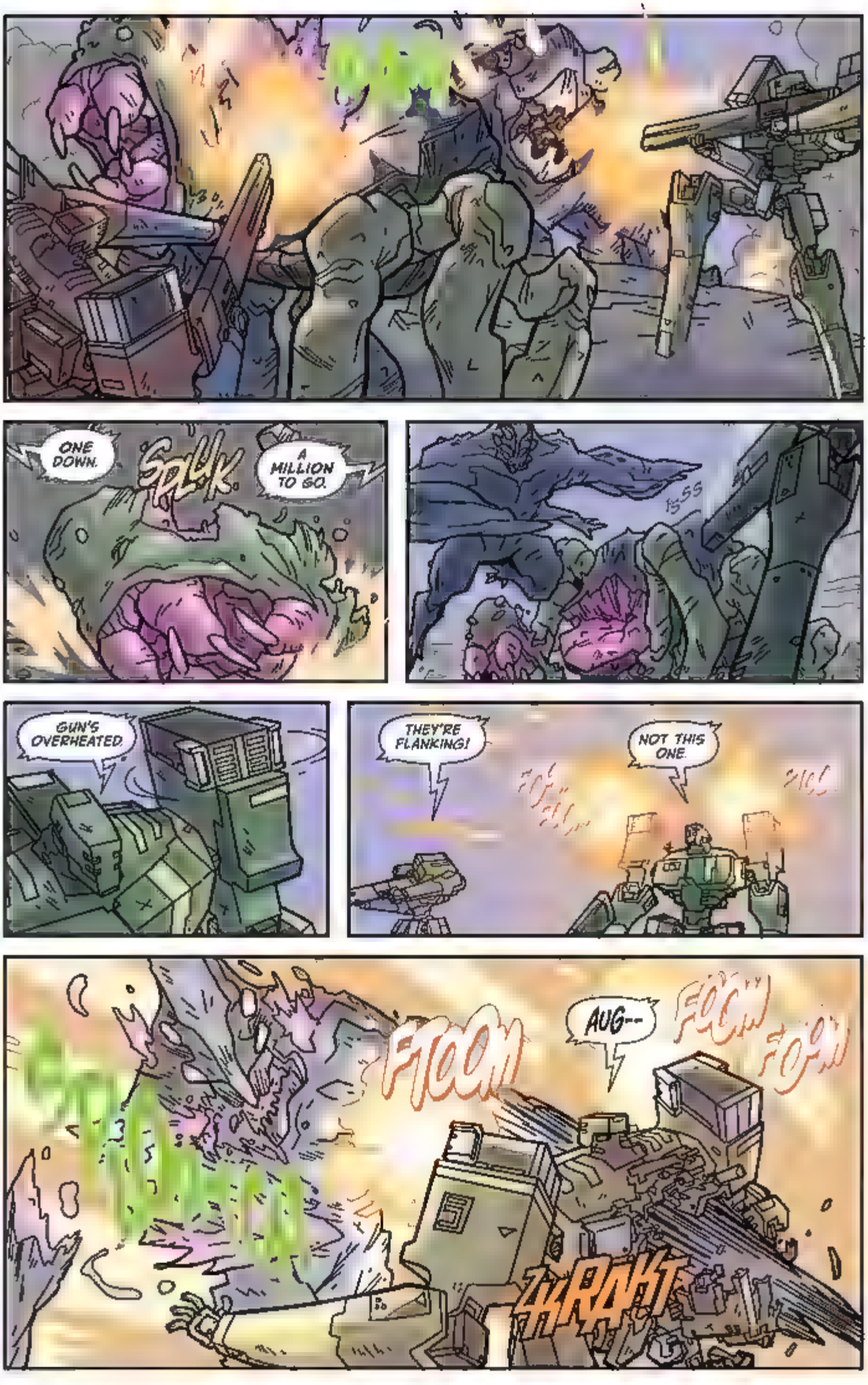

STERNWAFFEN "LONGINUS"
YEAH. NO PRESSURE
I MEAN. WE ONLY HAD ONE SHOT ANYWAY
HEY, YEAH, SO HOW'S THAT COMING?
WELL. MY GERMAN'S A LITTLE RUSTY. SO, THERE'S SOME GUESSWORK
HOW MUCH IS SOME?
A LOT BUT OUR INSTRUMENTATION DOWN THERE SHOULD BE MORE ACCURATE ANYWAY. CONFIRM MY ANGLE
YUP. GIVE US A MINUTE
OKAY. PRETTY SURE I'M LOOKING AT THE RIGHT PANEL IF I NEED TO MAKE AN ADJUSTMENT
JUST GOTTA CLEAR SOME DUST OFF
ORBITPANZER

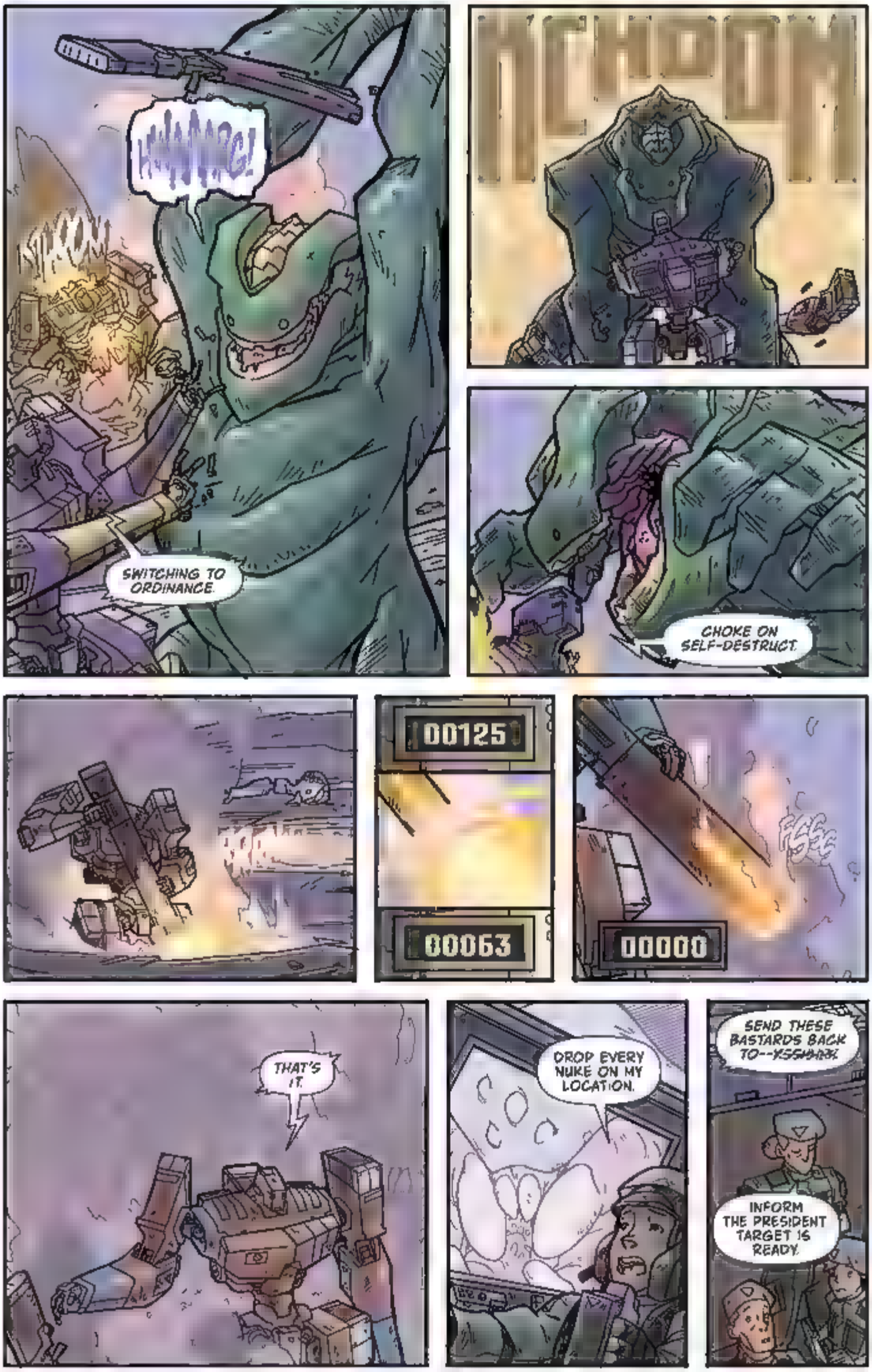

UM. WE NEED TO THROW THE SPEARS. SOON.
TRAJECTORY CONFIRMED, BOSS. GOOD TO GO.
TEN SECONDS TO WINDOW OF ATTACK
C'MON
FIVE. FOUR.
C'MON.
THREE. TWO.
YOU MAY FIRE WHEN READY.
WAS THAT AN INTENTIONAL TARKIN?
SHUNK
SPEARS OF DESTINY AWAY

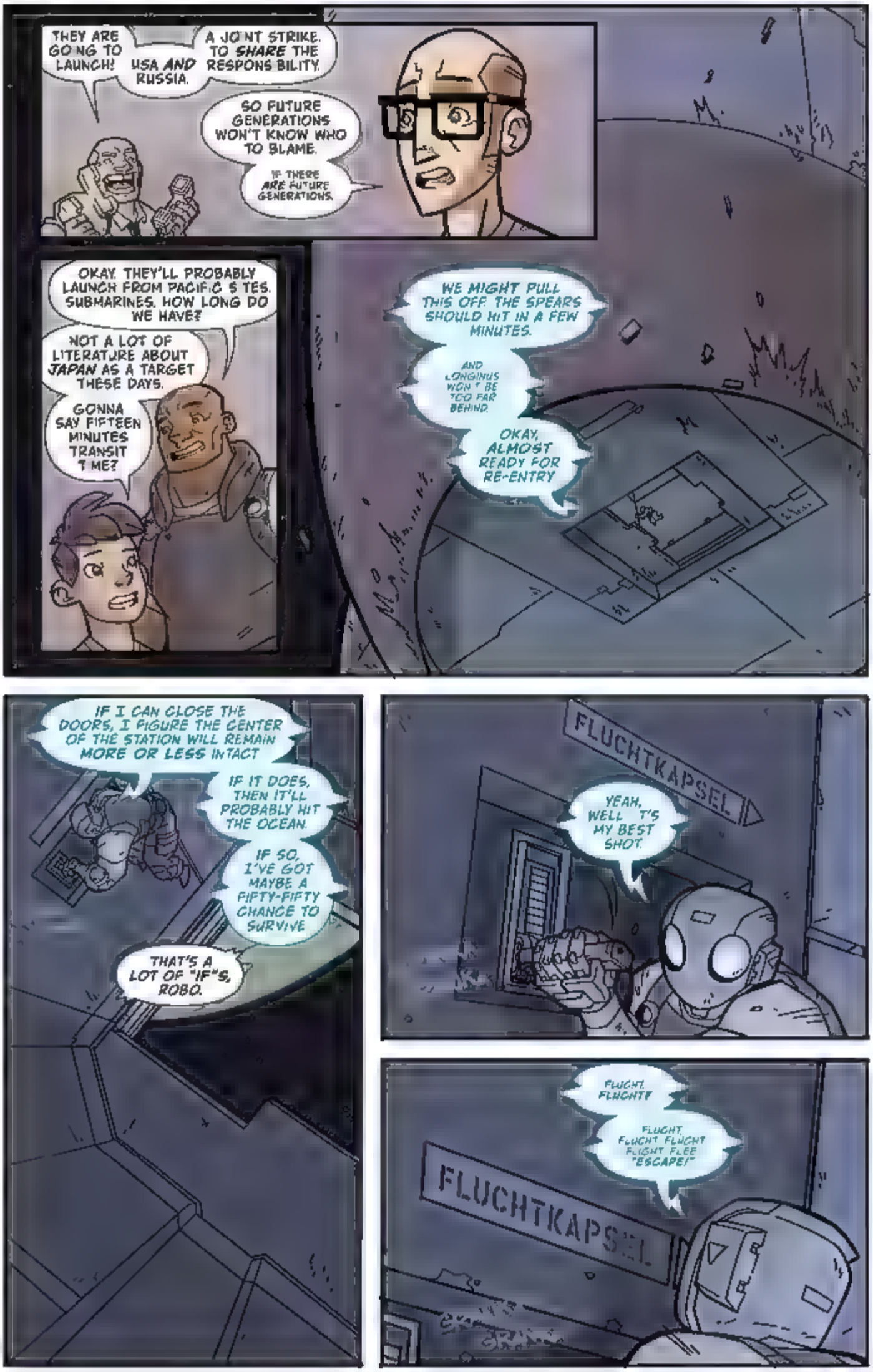

VIBRATIONS IN THE STRUCTURE SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.
YEAH, RADAR'S PICKING UP A SLIGHT CHANGE IN THE SATELLITE'S GEOMETRY.
SO EVERYTHING'S WORKING OUT GREAT!
AUGH!
UH?
ROBO? YOU THERE?
IS THE PAYLOAD FREE?
HHHHHHH
WRRR
PSHH
FREE AND CLEAR, ROBO. SPEARS WILL IMPACT IN TEN MINUTES.
UH, GUYS? SOMETHING'S VERY WRONG WITH ROBO'S ORBIT.

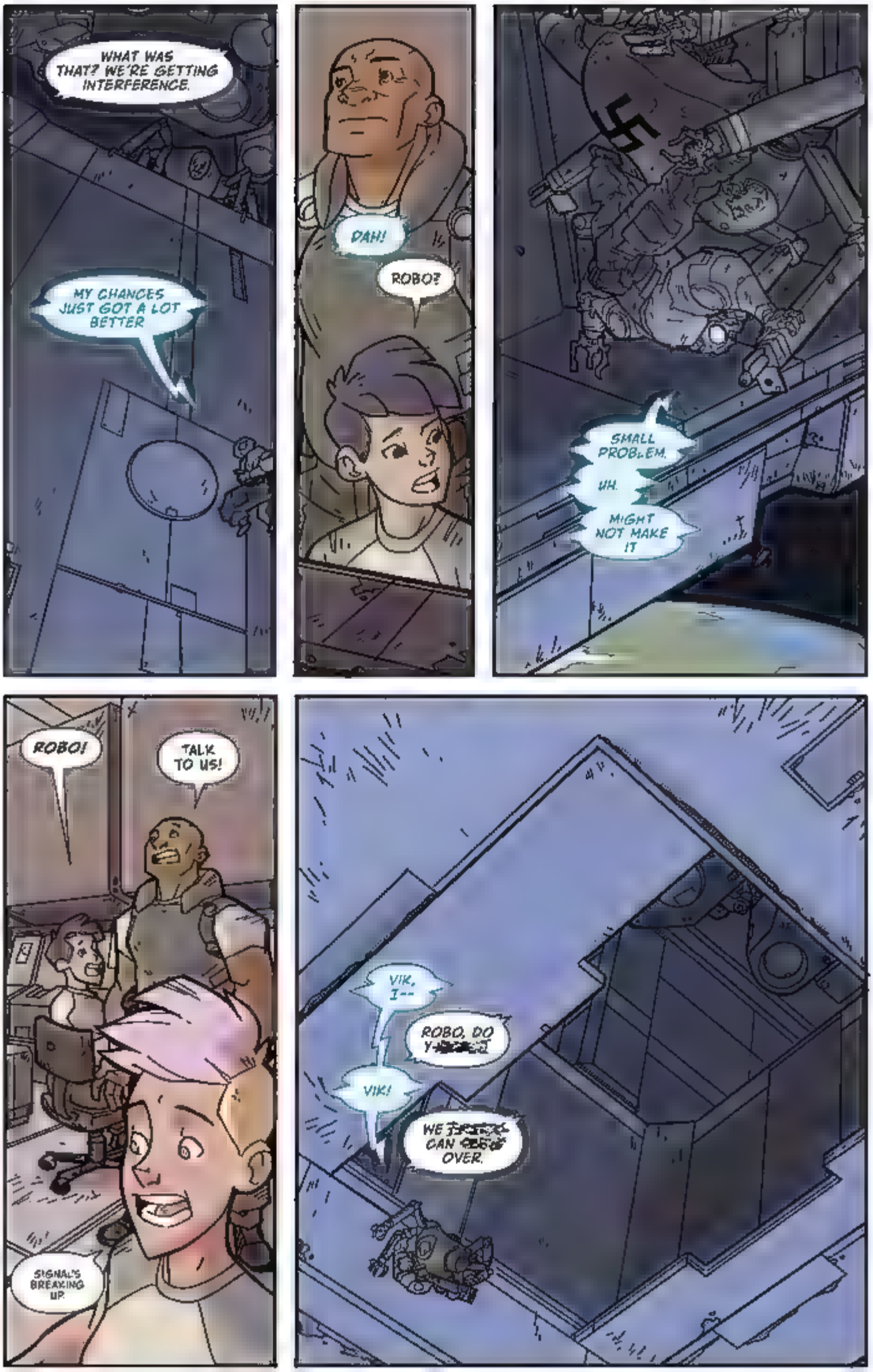

ROBO? LANG HERE. THE KID'S PICKED UP A MINOR ANOMALY IN YOUR ORBIT.
JUST A HEADS UP WHILE WE, UH, DOUBLE-CHECK.
I THINK I KNOW WHAT IT IS.
SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE. SOME KINDA ZERO-G LAUFPANZER VARIANT
WOULDN'T THAT NEED A PILOT?
PART OF ONE. THERE'S A HEAD. IT'S ANGRY.
AND KINDA GROSS
OH, MAN! DO YOU THINK IT'S DERIVED FROM HELSINGARD'S NEURO-MECHANICAL WORK?
OR DID THE NAZ-S HAVE THEIR OWN CYBERNETICS PROGRAM?
ROBO, CAN YOU BRING IT BACK? I WOULD LOVE TO STUDY IT!
NO
THOOM

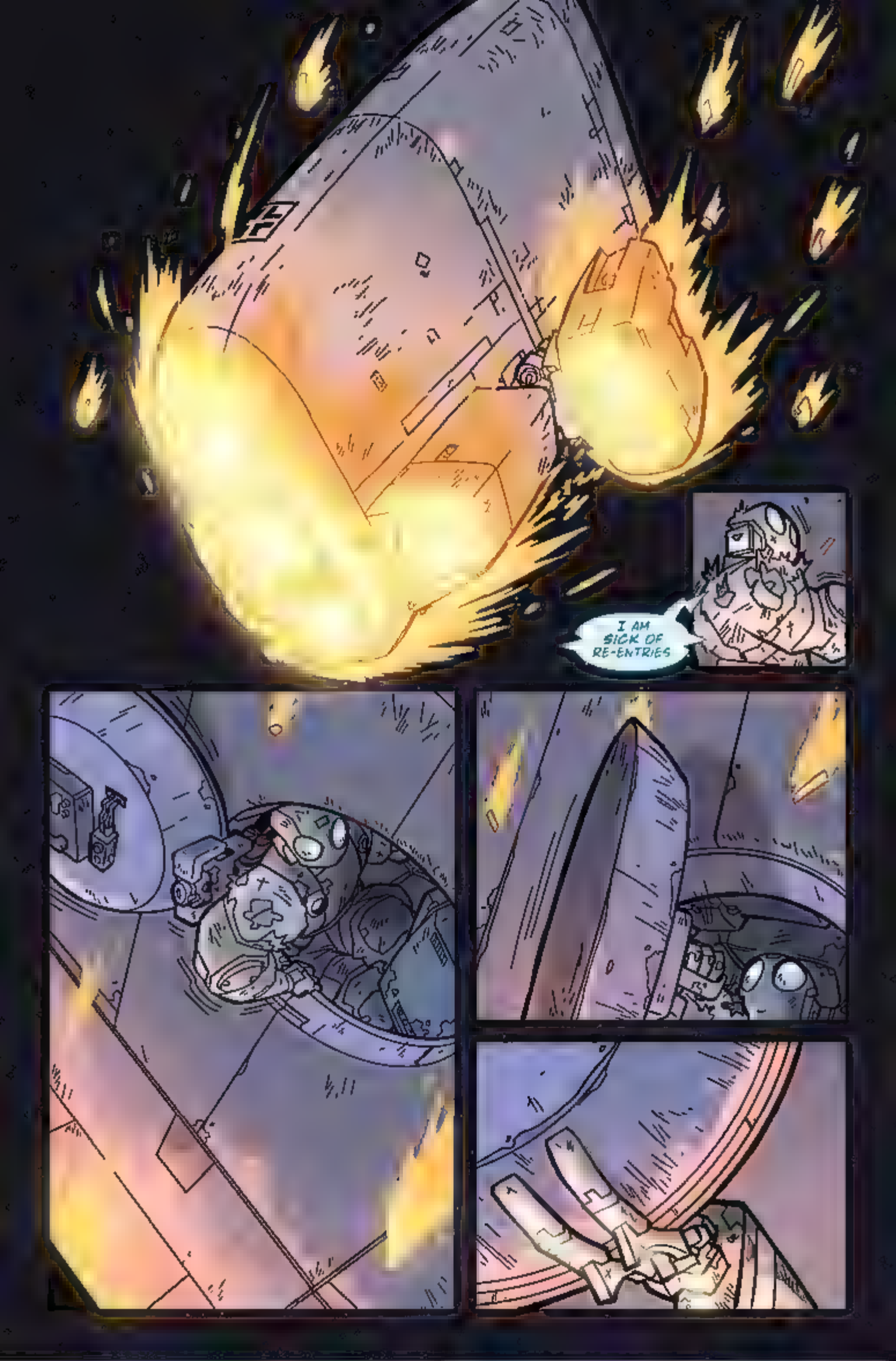

HEY, ROBO?
I DON'T MEAN TO ALARM YOU? BUT THAT MINOR ANOMALY WE PICKED UP IN YOUR ORBIT? IT'S, UH, REALLY HUGE NOW.
WE CAN TALK YOU THROUGH STABILIZING WHEN YOU FINISH WRESTLING.
NOW, IT MIGHT NOT FIX YOUR PROBLEM, BUT IT'LL BUY YOU SOME TIME
WHAT IF THE CONTROL ROOM IS SLIGHTLY DESTROYED?
HOW "SLIGHTLY" ARE WE TALKING?
IT'S ONLY A CONTROL ROOM IN THE PAST TENSE
OKAY, OKAY. IF WE CAN SHUT THE LAUNCH BAY THEN THE STATION M GHT NOT D SINTEGRATE ON THE WAY DOWN.
EVEN THEN WE'LL BE LUCKY IF THERE'S ANYTH NG LEFT OF HIM AFTER IMPACT TO IDENTIFY.
UH, YOU KNOW I CAN HEAR YOU, RIGHT?
SORRY, ROBO.
WELL, THE GOOD NEWS IS I KILLED THE SPACE MONSTER


ONE DOWN.
SPLUK
A MILLION TO GO.
GUN'S OVERHEATED.
THEY'RE FLANKING!
NOT THIS ONE.
FOOM
AUG--
FOOM FOOM
AKRAKT


KCHOOM
SWITCHING TO ORDINANCE.
CHOKE ON SELF-DESTRUCT.
00125
00063
00000
THAT'S IT.
DROP EVERY NUKE ON MY LOCATION.
SEND THESE BASTARDS BACK TO--
INFORM THE PRESIDENT TARGET IS READY.

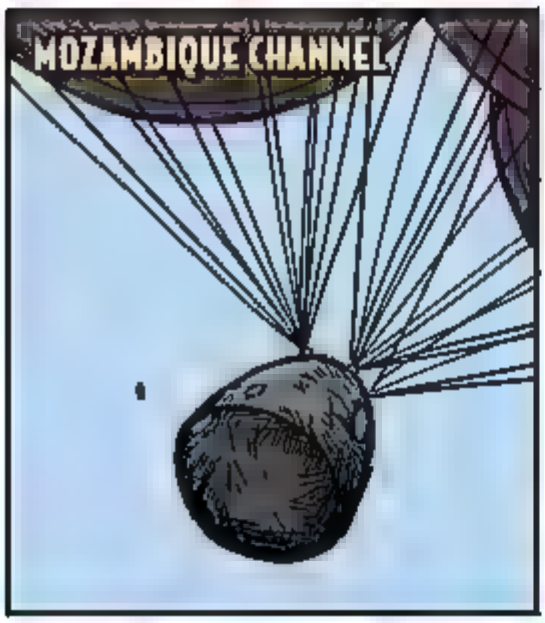

THEY ARE GO NG TO LAUNCH!
USA AND RUSSIA.
A JO NT STRIKE. TO SHARE THE RESPONS BILITY.
SO FUTURE GENERATIONS WON'T KNOW WHO TO BLAME.
IF THERE ARE FUTURE GENERATIONS.
OKAY. THEY'LL PROBABLY LAUNCH FROM PACIFIC S TES. SUBMARINES. HOW LONG DO WE HAVE?
NOT A LOT OF LITERATURE ABOUT JAPAN AS A TARGET THESE DAYS.
GONNA SAY FIFTEEN MINUTES TRANSIT T ME?
WE MIGHT PULL THIS OFF. THE SPEARS SHOULD HIT IN A FEW MINUTES.
AND LONGINUS WON T BE TOO FAR BEHIND.
OKAY, ALMOST READY FOR RE-ENTRY
IF I CAN CLOSE THE DOORS, I FIGURE THE CENTER OF THE STATION WILL REMAIN MORE OR LESS INTACT
IF IT DOES, THEN IT'LL PROBABLY HIT THE OCEAN.
IF SO, I'VE GOT MAYBE A FIFTY-FIFTY CHANCE TO SURVIVE
THAT'S A LOT OF "IF"S, ROBO.
FLUCHTKAPSEL
YEAH, WELL T'S MY BEST SHOT.
FLUCHTKAPSEL
FLUCHT. FLUCHT!
FLUCHT. FLUCHT FLUCHT FLIGHT FLEE "ESCAPE!"

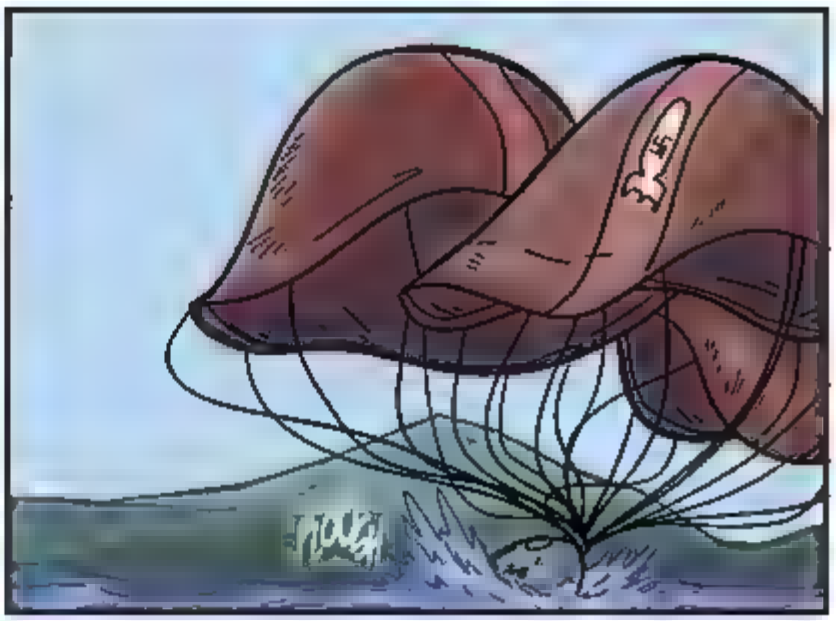

WHAT WAS THAT? WE'RE GETTING INTERFERENCE.
MY CHANCES JUST GOT A LOT BETTER
DAH!
ROBO?
SMALL PROBLEM.
UH.
MIGHT NOT MAKE IT
ROBO!
TALK TO US!
SIGNAL'S BREAKING UP.
VIK, I--
ROBO, DO Y[illegible]
VIK!
WE [illegible] CAN [illegible] OVER.

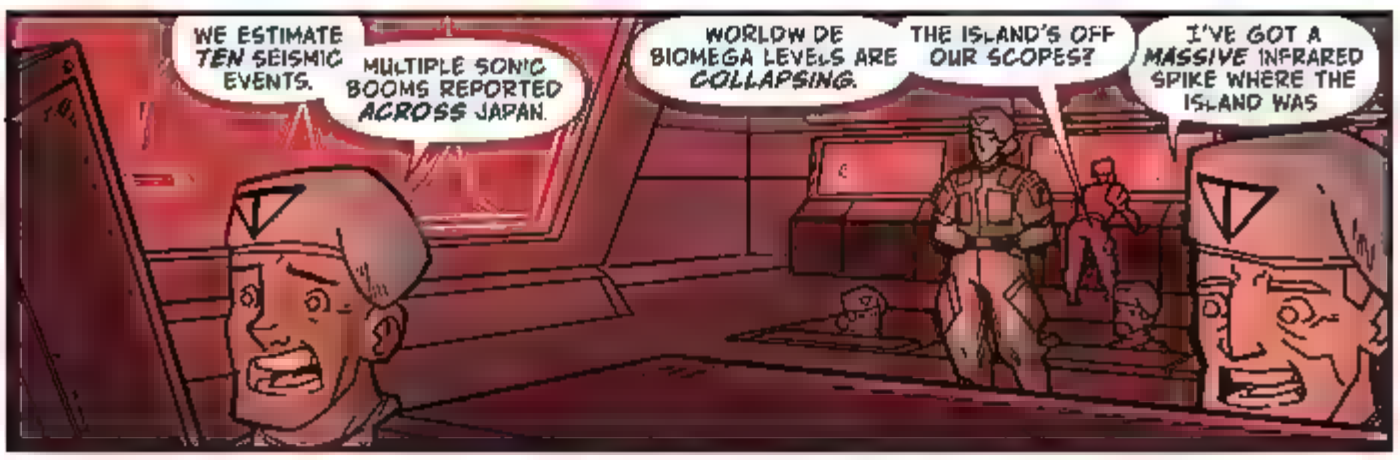

I AM SICK OF RE-ENTRIES

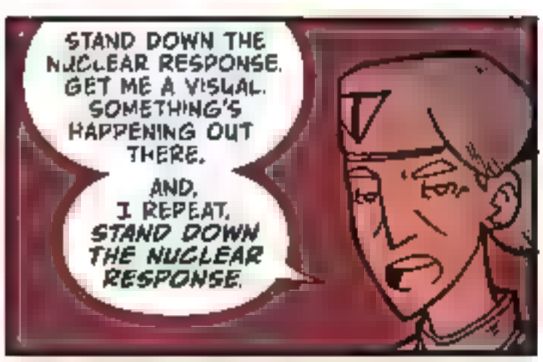
NATIONAL COMMAND AUTHORITY CONFIRMS GOLD CODE THEY WILL LAUNCH ON OUR MARK
KABOOM

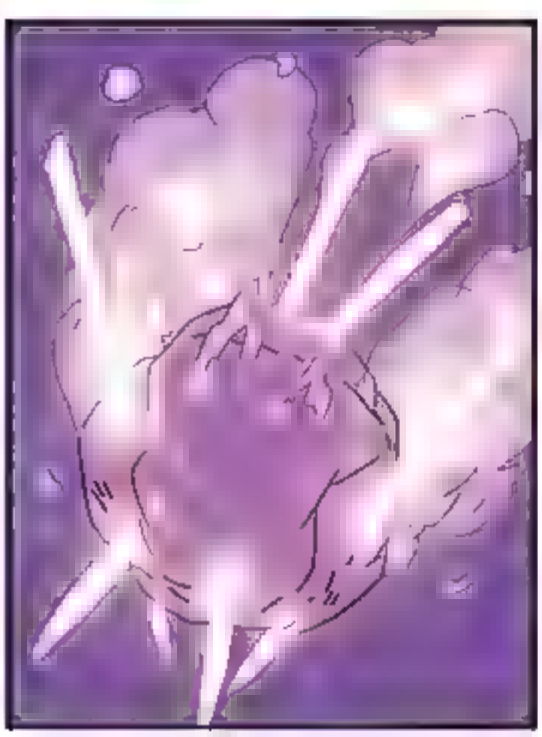
STARTEN

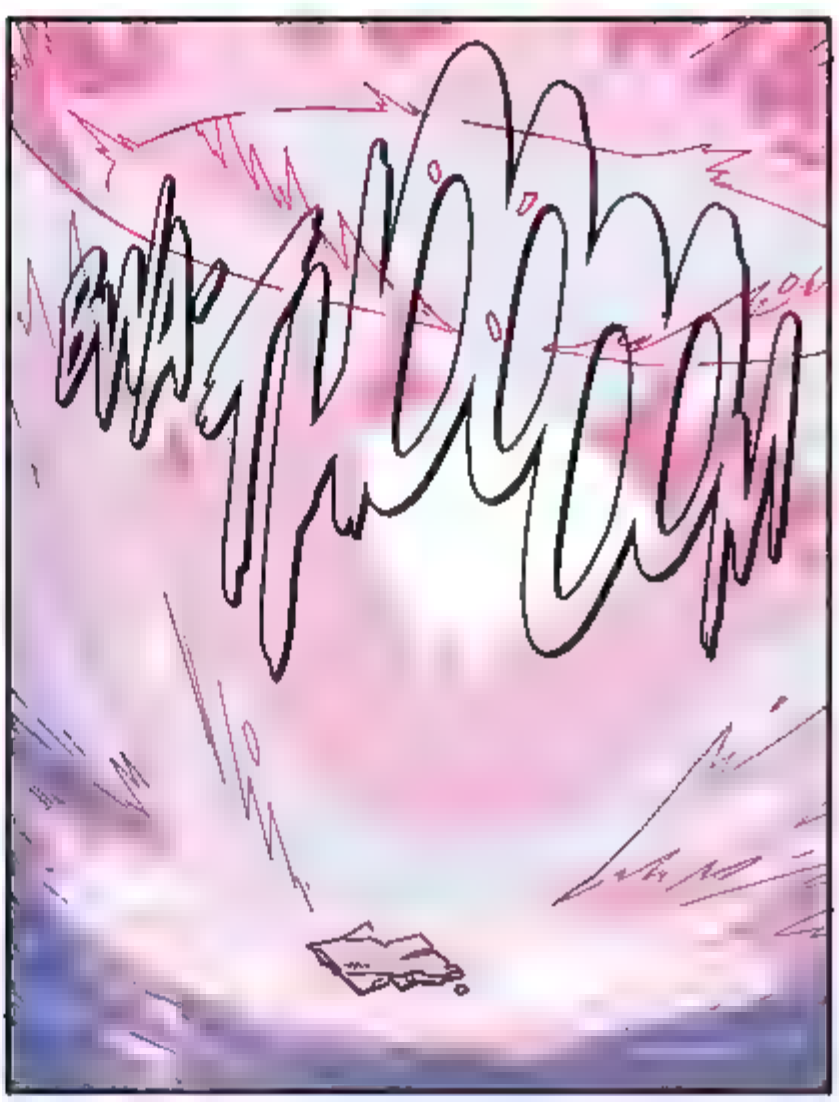

MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL

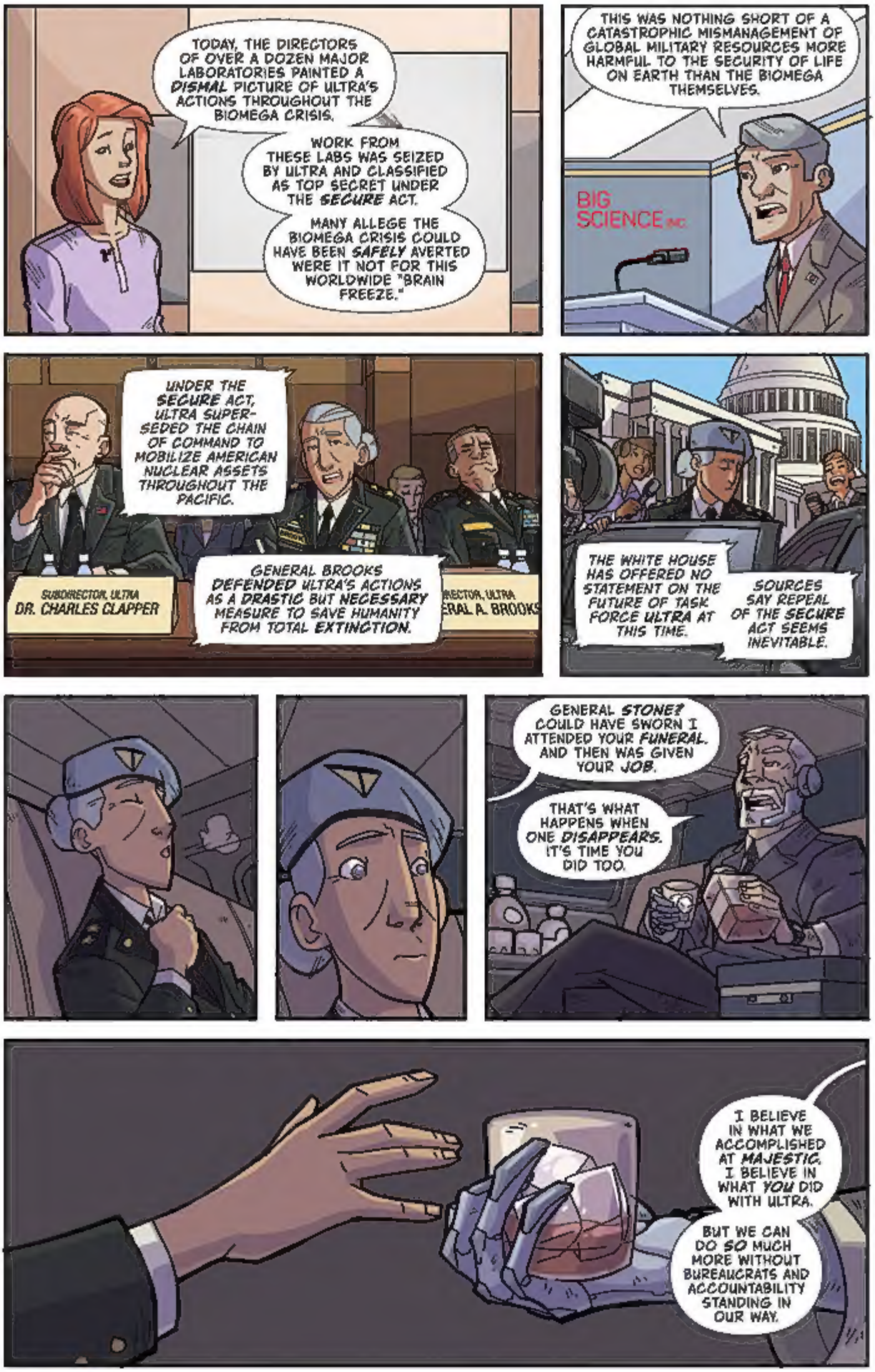


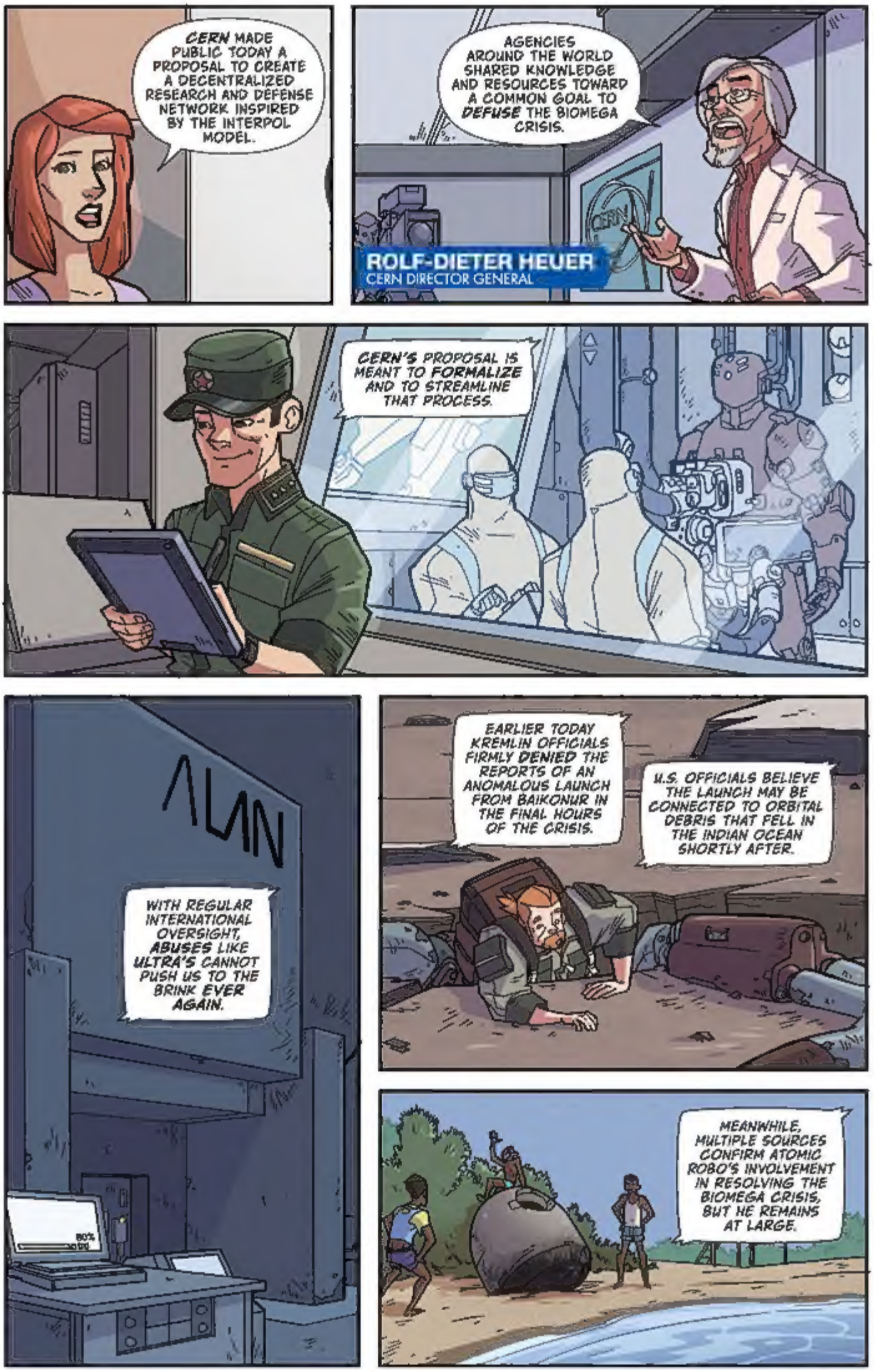

WE ESTIMATE TEN SEISMIC EVENTS.
MULTIPLE SONIC BOOMS REPORTED ACROSS JAPAN.
WORLDWIDE BIOMEGA LEVELS ARE COLLAPSING.
THE ISLAND'S OFF OUR SCOPES?
I'VE GOT A MASSIVE INFRARED SPIKE WHERE THE ISLAND WAS

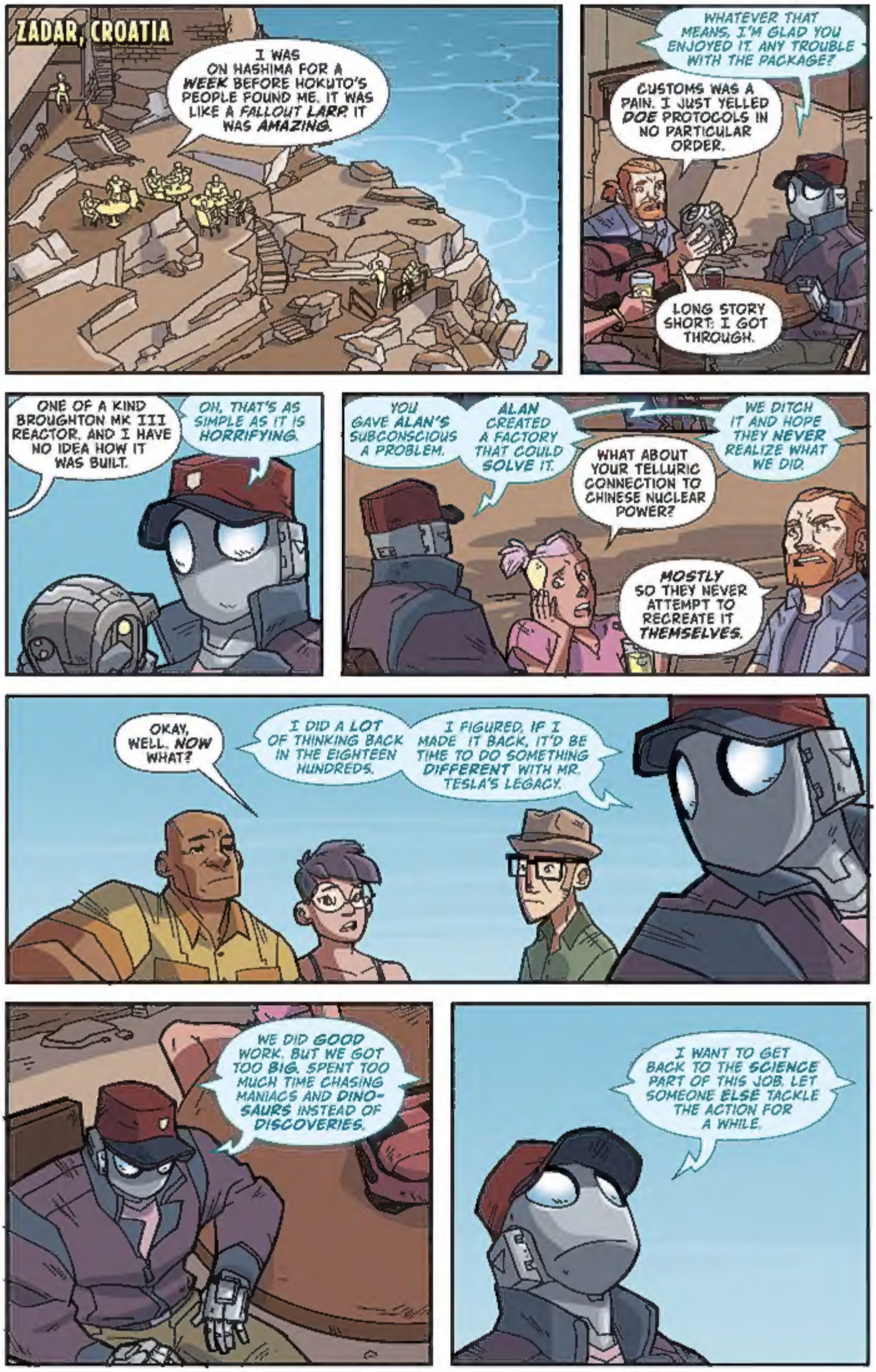

STAND DOWN THE NUCLEAR RESPONSE. GET ME A VISUAL. SOMETHING'S HAPPENING OUT THERE.
AND, I REPEAT, STAND DOWN THE NUCLEAR RESPONSE.




KABOOM


TODAY, THE DIRECTORS OF OVER A DOZEN MAJOR LABORATORIES PAINTED A DISMAL PICTURE OF ULTRA'S ACTIONS THROUGHOUT THE BIOMEGA CRISIS.
WORK FROM THESE LABS WAS SEIZED BY ULTRA AND CLASSIFIED AS TOP SECRET UNDER THE SECURE ACT.
MANY ALLEGE THE BIOMEGA CRISIS COULD HAVE BEEN SAFELY AVERTED WERE IT NOT FOR THIS WORLDWIDE "BRAIN FREEZE."
THIS WAS NOTHING SHORT OF A CATASTROPHIC MISMANAGEMENT OF GLOBAL MILITARY RESOURCES MORE HARMFUL TO THE SECURITY OF LIFE ON EARTH THAN THE BIOMEGA THEMSELVES.
BIG SCIENCE INC.
UNDER THE SECURE ACT, ULTRA SUPERSEDED THE CHAIN OF COMMAND TO MOBILIZE AMERICAN NUCLEAR ASSETS THROUGHOUT THE PACIFIC.
SUBDIRECTOR, ULTRA
DR. CHARLES CLAPPER
GENERAL BROOKS DEFENDED ULTRA'S ACTIONS AS A DRASTIC BUT NECESSARY MEASURE TO SAVE HUMANITY FROM TOTAL EXTINCTION.
THE WHITE HOUSE HAS OFFERED NO STATEMENT ON THE FUTURE OF TASK FORCE ULTRA AT THIS TIME.
SOURCES SAY REPEAL OF THE SECURE ACT SEEMS INEVITABLE.
GENERAL STONE? COULD HAVE SWORN I ATTENDED YOUR FUNERAL. AND THEN WAS GIVEN YOUR JOB.
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE DISAPPEARS. IT'S TIME YOU DID TOO.
I BELIEVE IN WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED AT MAJESTIC. I BELIEVE IN WHAT YOU DID WITH ULTRA.
BUT WE CAN DO SO MUCH MORE WITHOUT BUREAUCRATS AND ACCOUNTABILITY STANDING IN OUR WAY.


CERN MADE PUBLIC TODAY A PROPOSAL TO CREATE A DECENTRALIZED RESEARCH AND DEFENSE NETWORK INSPIRED BY THE INTERPOL MODEL.
AGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD SHARED KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES TOWARD A COMMON GOAL TO DEFUSE THE BIOMEGA CRISIS.
CERN
ROLF-DIETER HEUER
CERN DIRECTOR GENERAL
CERN'S PROPOSAL IS MEANT TO FORMALIZE AND TO STREAMLINE THAT PROCESS.
ALAN
WITH REGULAR INTERNATIONAL OVERSIGHT, ABUSES LIKE ULTRA'S CANNOT PUSH US TO THE BRINK EVER AGAIN.
80%
EARLIER TODAY KREMLIN OFFICIALS FIRMLY DENIED THE REPORTS OF AN ANOMALOUS LAUNCH FROM BAIKONUR IN THE FINAL HOURS OF THE CRISIS.
U.S. OFFICIALS BELIEVE THE LAUNCH MAY BE CONNECTED TO ORBITAL DEBRIS THAT FELL IN THE INDIAN OCEAN SHORTLY AFTER.
MEANWHILE, MULTIPLE SOURCES CONFIRM ATOMIC ROBO'S INVOLVEMENT IN RESOLVING THE BIOMEGA CRISIS, BUT HE REMAINS AT LARGE.


ZADAR, CROATIA
I WAS ON HASHIMA FOR A WEEK BEFORE HOKUTO'S PEOPLE FOUND ME. IT WAS LIKE A FALLOUT LARP. IT WAS AMAZING.
WHATEVER THAT MEANS, I'M GLAD YOU ENJOYED IT. ANY TROUBLE WITH THE PACKAGE?
CUSTOMS WAS A PAIN. I JUST YELLED DOE PROTOCOLS IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER.
LONG STORY SHORT: I GOT THROUGH.
ONE OF A KIND BROUGHTON MK III REACTOR. AND I HAVE NO IDEA HOW IT WAS BUILT.
OH, THAT'S AS SIMPLE AS IT IS HORRIFYING.
YOU GAVE ALAN'S SUBCONSCIOUS A PROBLEM.
ALAN CREATED A FACTORY THAT COULD SOLVE IT.
WHAT ABOUT YOUR TELLURIC CONNECTION TO CHINESE NUCLEAR POWER?
WE DITCH IT AND HOPE THEY NEVER REALIZE WHAT WE DID.
MOSTLY SO THEY NEVER ATTEMPT TO RECREATE IT THEMSELVES.
OKAY, WELL. NOW WHAT?
I DID A LOT OF THINKING BACK IN THE EIGHTEEN HUNDREDS.
I FIGURED, IF I MADE IT BACK, IT'D BE TIME TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT WITH MR. TESLA'S LEGACY.
WE DID GOOD WORK. BUT WE GOT TOO BIG. SPENT TOO MUCH TIME CHASING MANIACS AND DINOSAURS INSTEAD OF DISCOVERIES.
I WANT TO GET BACK TO THE SCIENCE PART OF THIS JOB. LET SOMEONE ELSE TACKLE THE ACTION FOR A WHILE.

UH, ROBO. DIDN'T WE JUST GO THROUGH A WHOLE THING WHERE THAT DIDN'T WORK OUT AT ALL?
WELL, YEAH.
BUT THAT'S TAKEN CARE OF NOW.
ABYSSAL ZONE
THE END